

“Peking to Paris Porsche”

**Story and Photos by
Sean Cridland**

**Published in
*Excellence***

The Magazine About Porsche
April 2014



DR. PORSCHE'S TYPE 22 SUPERCAR

THE MAGAZINE

ABOUT PORSCHE

excellence

918

PORSCHE
REDEFINES THE
HYBRID *AND*
THE SPORTS CAR

SPYDER



APRIL 2014
\$5.99 (Canada \$5.99)



902 "PROTOTYPE"

THE SURPRISING EVOLUTION OF
THE 901'S "LITTLE BROTHER"

COOL "CROSSOVER"

WHAT DO YOU GET BY MERGING A
CAYMAN WITH A 911? PERFECTION!



120



108



65

94



103

contents

NO. 217 APRIL 2014

- 54** Porsche 918 Spyder
Better—much better—than excellent
IAN KUAH, DAVID DONOHUE, MATT DAVIS
- 65** 902 "Prototype"
The oldest four-cylinder 911
WOLFGANG BLAUBE
- 70** Best of Both Worlds
DeMan Motorsports crosses Cayman and 911
DAVID HAUTER
- 84** Porsche Faces Life
Dr. Porsche's Auto Union Type 22 supercar
KARL LUDVIGSEN
- 89** Hooked on Hills
Have some fun! Run a hill climb!
JOHN WEBBER
- 94** Profile: Joaquim Filipe Nogueira
An early Porsche racing hero from Portugal
MARK MORRISEY
- 103** Yesterday, Once More
Erasing a bad memory with a custom Turbo
IAN KUAH
- 108** Peking-to-Paris Porsche
8,000 miles in a 1965 911
SEAN CRIDLAND
- 114** American Racers
Ex-SCCA and Trans-Am 911s
DAVID CONKLIN
- 120** Alpha 9 Turbo
From a new player on the performance scene
PETER WU

76 READER SALES REPORTS
82 PAGE TURNERS

6 EDITOR'S DESK GREG N. BROWN
10 LETTERS TO THE EDITOR
21 ZUFFENSTOFF DENNIS SIMANAITIS
26 TECH NOTES TONY CALLAS/TOM PRINE
144 PARALLAX KERRY MORSE

102 BACK ISSUES
124 EXCELLENCE MARKETPLACE
143 ADVERTISER INDEX

COVER SHOTS
ILLUSTRATION OF AUTO UNION TYPE 22 FROM THE KARL
LUDVIGSEN ARCHIVES. 918 COURTESY PORSCHE AG.

8,000 miles in a 1965 911

STORY AND PHOTOS BY SEAN CRIDLAND

The young Russian woman, a border guard stationed in the desolate steppes of southern Siberia, sees a small white spot on the horizon, trailing long plumes of dust. As the speck gets closer, it appears to be a small European sports car with a big green mattress on the roof. As it pulls up to her station, she dutifully checks all the paperwork, several times over, and asks the two very obviously American travelers where they've been and where they're headed. From Beijing, they tell her, through Ulan Bator, then across the Gobi Desert. They're on their way to Paris. She listens carefully. Taking time to be sure she has the right English words, she says, "You guys are crazy!"

Crazy isn't the half of it. Stanley Gold and Brant Parsons are two of the most dedicated Porsche-holics you'll ever encounter. Gold is a self-described "Porsche guy" whose successful business career with the Shamrock Corporation has enabled him to enjoy his passion around the globe. Along with Parsons as his team manager, lead mechanic, logistical miracle worker and co-driver, Gold has raced in classic and historic events for more than 20 years in a variety of legendary

Porsche racers, including a 904, an RS60, a 914/6 and the 1965 911 that just found its way across two continents in the 2013 Peking-to-Paris Rally.

Initially set up as a race car, the little white 911 has raced successfully across Europe in events such as the Tour Britannia, Tour d'Espagne, Classic Le Mans, the AvD Oldtimer Grand Prix at the Nürburgring, and the 24 Hours of Magny Cours, always with a strong record of reliability. But, to run in "raid"-style rallying over long distances would require a different level of preparation.

Parsons had the car flown from their European base just outside of Paris to his shop in San Diego in order to strip and rebuild it from the ground up.

Because the car had a history of endurance racing, it was already equipped with a full roll-cage and a 100-liter fuel tank. From that point on, almost everything would be different. The car would have to be as high as possible to clear rocks, ruts, potholes, and long stretches of roadless wilderness. It would need to be strong, so Parsons re-welded any questionable seams. To help seal out dust and water, Parsons coated both the underside and the interior with paint-on truck bed liner.

PEKING-TO-PARIS PORSCHE



The transmission would need special gearing for slow going over the dirt, rocks and sand of northern China, Mongolia and the steppes of southern Siberia: close-ratio gears for the first four and a much taller gear for fifth for when they found any reasonable road and could cruise at a higher rate of speed (80-90 mph) and still get decent gas mileage.

Travel in remote areas of Asia and eastern Europe meant fuel quality would be unreliable, so Parsons started with a 911E motor and rebuilt the engine with a low compression ratio of 8.0:1, using small ports and valves for good torque and power in the mid- and low ranges and adequate power for cruising. Output is estimated to be 145 hp at the flywheel.

To filter out the legendary Mongolian dust, Parsons fitted an extra K&N filter to the stock intake and then fitted a cloth

inches of ground clearance just by turning the torsion bars. Struts measure 21mm struts up front and 28mm in the rear, quite a bit heavier than the OE units, and Bilstein Sport adjustable shocks dampen all four corners. The brakes were upgraded with larger brake calipers from a '69 S, and the solid rotors were replaced by vented units for the stopping power needed because of the car's extra weight.

After some consideration, Parsons and Gold settled on Pirelli Scorpion tires on polished, stock 6x15 Fuchs wheels. The tall, heavy-duty tires are designed for vans and provided some extra ground clearance and have a tread pattern optimized for traction in the mud and sand.

The interior of the car was finished with purpose and comfort in mind. The plastic racing windows came out; glass

into Paris, even after 8,000 miles of driving often 10 to 12 hours a day.

The dashboard was mostly filled with stock 1965 Porsche gauges, except for augmentations needed for rallying. Parsons fitted an extra speedometer for the navigator to be in constant contact with the mileage and compare it to the route book. Both speedos were converted to run off a GPS system for increased accuracy, from a five-percent error down to less than one percent. They added a special Monit rally GPS computer for the special stages where precision mattered most. For the stages where no roads existed, they used a Garmin 76 GPS module programmed with way-points by race organizers. In addition, both Gold and Parsons attended a special school in London for military-style GPS navigation training.



sock over it. Daily maintenance included removing the sock, shaking it against the side of the car and putting it back on.

Some of the city roads in northern China and Mongolia are still dirt and are often muddy with standing water as much as a foot deep, so Parsons engineered a removable snorkel for the exhaust system. It was easily detached or mounted, so when they encountered wet conditions they'd pull over, put it on and continue. They never encountered water deep enough to require an intake snorkel.

According to Parsons, the entire powertrain pulled strongly and required little maintenance. He claims the engine never needed additional oil for the entire 8,000 miles.

The suspension was reinforced by welding extra heavy plates into it, and Parsons was able to get a good eight

ones went back in. They're much more resistant to pitting; the plastic would have turned opaque in a matter of hours in the desert. The car's racing background meant carpet, headlining and sound-proofing were already stripped. Because storage space was at a premium, Parsons used some aluminum paneling to create an extra compartment in the rear-seat area. Although the car retained its heating system, they were reluctant to use it. During one of their off-road test runs they made the mistake of turning on the fan, and soon the car was filled with dust. Better just to wear an extra layer.

For long-distance comfort, they replaced the Sparco racing seats with custom off-road seats made by Mastercraft for racing the Baja 1000. Much more comfortable, both Parsons and Gold were still happy with them when they pulled

The "green mattress" is, in fact, their extra storage area for tools, spare parts and personal effects that wouldn't fit in the car. Parsons built an aluminum roof-rack to put on the top of the car that weighed about 60 pounds, empty. It included seven individual "floorboards" they could put under the wheels for traction, if needed. The hardest part, says Parsons, was the mind-game of trying to decide what they might need when in the middle of nowhere but doing it in the comfort of the shop in San Diego. They settled for a spare alternator, spare starter, extra wheel bearings, two extra wheels and tires, a mini-compressor, and a hefty jack.

Weather dictated that both had clothes for extreme conditions from insufferable heat to unbearable cold: large coats and ski gloves, wool socks, and all the assorted under-layers. Gold and Parsons each had

“
The hardest part
was the mind-game of trying to
guess what we might need
8,000 miles from home.
”



A multi-filter system kept the mostly stock 911E engine running flawlessly despite running on long stretches of dusty dirt roads. The custom roof rack held extra tires, parts and the tools for on-the-go repairs. The footwell area was designed for both practicality and comfort.



With only a minor malfunction of an aftermarket part, Gold and Parsons proved the 1965 911's true grit. Up next: The Road to Mandalay Rally.

room for a small duffel-bag (about 2x1 ft) and a small day-pack. Fully loaded—with 100 liters of fuel, spare parts and tires on the roof, personal luggage, navigational and communications equipment, and camping gear—the car weighed 2900 pounds...without occupants, neither of whom are small.

For testing, they entered a rally event from Vancouver to Anchorage in 2012 where the car came in first in class and second overall, an indication that the former race car would be a good rally challenger. In addition, Gold took the car out on several 500-mile test runs in the Southern California desert.

The only mechanical problem with the car was a broken strut cap. According to Gold, "We were going about 50 mph in the desert, and it was hard to see. Suddenly there was six-foot cliff. By the time we noticed, it was too late." Off they went, both of them screaming like kids in a Steven Spielberg movie. The car landed fairly softly, it seemed, and they continued for the next 200 miles to finish the stage. It wasn't until the next day that they began to hear a little rattle. By the end of the day it was a big rattle, and Parsons

knew something was wrong. Popping open the hood, he immediately saw the driver's-side strut sticking up through the shock-tower. They were in trouble. It wasn't a part they had with them and, being in the middle of nowhere, there was no way to engineer one. They found a local with a truck who transported them for a couple days until one of Gold's friends could fly in from London, hand-carrying the necessary piece.

The strut bearing in the car was made of a composite cast material with a mono-ball setup. They'd used the same kind in all their European endurance racing with no issues. Nor did the problem show up in their off-road testing. Parsons believes that an OEM piece would have given no problem. If it had, it would have been easier to fix. In any case, it'll be in their kit for the next event.

Gold and Parsons speak volumes about the car's performance, adaptability, and reliability. Parsons already has a few modifications in mind for the next event. He thinks he can get up to two inches more in height and can probably go lighter in a few areas. He also wants to flare out the rear fenders to get more inner

clearance for the tall tires, which rubbed on the chassis a bit in Mongolia. By widening the wheel space, they can employ a spacer to push the wheels out for extra body clearance, plus have a wider track for extra stability.

Upon finishing, the car was shipped home "as is" complete with road-grime, Mongolian dust, and stale champagne spray from celebrations in Paris. This past fall it made appearances in Los Angeles and Santa Fe with its patina intact. By now it's been cleaned and Parsons has begun the process of stripping it down to bare-bones all over again for another complete rebuild. Next destination: the 2014 Road to Mandalay rally, starting in Bangkok, running up the Malay peninsula through Thailand and Myanmar, and finishing on the docks at Rangoon. From the tracks of Europe, to the Mongolian desert and the steppes of Siberia and on to the jungles and rice paddies of Southeast Asia, this is one rugged little 911 that continues to go and go and go, along with a couple of crazy Californians at the wheel. As both Gold and Parsons are quick to point out, "Yes, we're crazy, but in a good way." ■