

# MiniNews

JANUARY 1982

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MINI OWNERS OF AMERICA — LOS ANGELES P.O. BOX 91785 LOS ANGELES, CA 90009

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Welcome to 1982! Yes, it's a brand new year and that means all the parts on your Mini are another year older. (What do you mean a rod for my 970 "S" is NLA!!!).

This month in history, (Fill in with Don Pardo type voice with heavy echo effect). January 1962, Austin Seven becomes Austin Mini. January 1964, Cooper 997 discontinued and is replaced by a 998 motor. January 1965, 970 Cooper "S" discontinued. This engine had the shortest production at only 11 months. January 1966, Cooper "S" models fitted with right hand fuel tank and oil coolers as an option. January 1973, rod change gear box introduced. And finally on January 1942, Joseph Lucas was seriously injured in an electrical fire while testing a new cigarette lighter near Birmingham England. So there you have it folks, a slice of history right out of the Mini patch. And speaking of history...

The second anual Tony "MAD DOG" Swisler Christmas Party is just that. And let me tell you, I would not have believed it if I hadn't seen it with my own eyes. It was disgusting! I haven't seen so many people acting with such depraved abandonment since I went to the "Come as your favorite organ" festival back in '76. (I thought it was a jazz concert). The noise was incredible. People diving off the second floor balcony into the arms of the people down below, the Slip-and-Slide through the living room, nude Christmas carolling and the goat just to name a few of the night's activities. (You can imagine my surprise when I woke up the next morning with the goat). Also Tony debuted his new Californian Moke though I thought it was a bit much when he drove it through the kitchen for more food. Anyway, enough of this Tom foolareee, it was probably just the drugs I was on that week.

Let's get down to business. The general meeting will be on the thurd Tuesday of the month. Thats January 15th at 8:00 PM. Where? The Mercury Savings building, 20715 S. Avalon Blvd.



Carson. That's between the Long Beach and Harbor fwy from the 405. Don't miss it. The new Reich will officially take over this month with Pete Smith swinging the gavel. Alan Shoemaker will be doing whatever Vice Presidents do. Dave Martin, trusty pen in hand as secretary while Patti Sherwin puts your wallet through the juicer as treasurer.

There will be a swap meet this month at Auto Exotics in Westminster. It will be on January 31st starting at around 10:00 am. The address is 14122 Willow Lane, the major land marks are the 405 fwy at Westminster Blvd. For more information, give me a call at

Thanks to John Gilbert for the use of his parking lot. Good, now I can dump all those cross drilled EN40B cranks I have!

It's time once again for a Mini Meet West update. The meet this year will be held in sunny Santa Barbara about 100 miles up the coast from L.A. At this very moment, our MMW Task Force is working to make this a very memorable weekend. If you would like to be a part of this team, talk to any of the club officers at our next meeting. I hope to have a more complete report for you in the months ahead.

So there it is, another month's worth of idle threats and slanderous rumors for your viewing pleasure.

*John Pearson*



**MINI**



## PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

Hello everyone,  
The beard may look the same, but the name behind it has changed. It is I, Pete Smith, your new club captain for '82. Thanks for your votes of confidence. I'll do my best to serve the club wisely, and to further the enjoyment of our dear autos, and the Mini Meet.

This year we will all be pretty busy. As president and one of the organising members of the Mini Meet I'll have to make many decisions, and you'll be asking more than a few questions. With clear heads I think we can again have the best Mini Meet to date.

One of the main things I'd like to accomplish for the club this year, besides a bang up Mini Meet, is to organize our meetings. In going over the club by-laws, I see that we have deviated a bit. I believe by having a more regulated meeting, we will have a more enjoyable meeting, and perhaps bring back a few of our old friends.

If you believe I'm on the right track let me know. With the same attitude, please let me know if you don't like my ideas. I wish for our club to be just that: OUR club. You may have elected me driver, but that dosen't mean the rest of you can't be navigators.

Pete



JEFF BLANKEN photos

*Shades of the Rabbit/Bilstein Cup! The Mini Metros duel ...*



# Ford plant illustrates UK productivity woes

## Similar West German facility outdoes it

By Steven Rathner  
New York Times

SAARLOUIS, West Germany — To the casual visitor, the sleek gray Ford Motor Co. plant here appears to be exactly like its cousin at Halewood, England, outside Liverpool. At each, shiny Escorts, Ford's hot new car, roll off bustling production lines dominated by robot welders and vast automated presses punching out steel as if it were aluminum foil.

But the resemblance ends at physical appearance. This plant produces some 1,200 cars a day, more than the 1,015 that Ford planners had anticipated, and requires 7,302 workers. Its counterpart at Halewood, with virtually identical equipment and production targets, has averaged only about 800 cars a day this year, and 14,000 workers have been needed to achieve even that production level.

Our standards say it should take something like 20 man-hours of labor in both the body and assembly plants to make an Escort," said Bill Hayden, vice president of manufacturing for Ford Europe Inc. "At Saarlouis, they do it with 21 hours. At Halewood it takes 40 hours."

The experience of Ford, with two plants that are alike in every important respect, provides an unusually graphic example of the extent to which Britain has fallen behind in the effort to improve worker productivity and the extent of the challenge facing Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher in her effort to restore Britain's competitiveness.

"All of the problems I have in Halewood, I have in Dagenham," Hayden said in his office in suburban London, referring to a Ford plant in another British city. "All of the problems I have are symbolic of the whole of British industry."

To Hayden, and Ford officials in Halewood, the differences between the two plants comes down to the attitudes of the workers. At Halewood, 28 strikes have occurred already this year; at Saarlouis, strikes are unknown. Under pressure, management at Halewood has organized the two daily shifts so that no one works on Friday night; at Saarlouis, there is no such pressure.

"It has to do with the mental attitude of our people here," said Paul Swoboda, the busy operations manager here. "People are very interested right from the beginning in making a high-quality product," he said in the plant's executive dining room.

Aside from statistics, subjective differences between the two factories become evident. Halewood seems to overflow with workers — some of them reading or eating, others kicking a soccer ball — while Saarlouis seems almost depopulated and nearly every worker in evidence is hard at his job. At Saarlouis, workers dash to open doors for visitors touring in electric carts, while at Halewood, one worker greeted a news photographer by exposing himself.

Despite the smaller work force, Saarlouis's quality record remains unmatched in the Ford system. Saarlouis Escorts, on average, earn half as many demerits as Halewood cars, which are about equal in quality to those produced in American plants. On one recent day at Halewood, 14 percent of the cars were rejected at the electrical system checkpoint. At Saarlouis a day later,

the same computerized "Qualitätskontrolle" rejected fewer than 1 percent of the completed Escorts.

For their part, the workers at Halewood maintained in recent interviews that shop conditions at Saarlouis were unsafe.

"If that was in England, I'd stop the job immediately," said Stephen Broadhead, the "convenor" at the body plant, who has visited the German plant twice. "It was such a violation of our health and safety regulations we couldn't live with it." Nonetheless, the Saarlouis plant has the lowest injury record in Ford's entire Europe subsidiary.

In one example mentioned by Broadhead, the Halewood union summoned a company doctor to rule that two men were required to lift the car hood onto the body, a job performed by one man at Saarlouis. But the other day at Halewood, only one man was lifting the hoods; the second man watched.

"From the very beginning it was always one man who picked up the hood," said Locher Katalla, a German worker here, as the dull silver car bodies moved along behind him, 48 an hour. "It's heavy as we switch every hour."

Such differences are found to pervade the two plants. In May, the workers at Halewood went on strike for 11 days because they contended that four men could not produce 62 transaxle assemblies an hour, as the company and the German experience suggested they could. Five months later, the four men are still assembling about 58 an hour.

The economic consequences for Britain of the lower productivity are also evident. When the two plants were refitted in August 1980, a significant portion of the 1,015 cars a day scheduled to be produced at Halewood were to be exported — to Scandinavia, France, Italy and elsewhere. The failure to meet production goals meant, in effect, no exports and no help for Britain's balance of trade.

Moreover, Ford officials have argued that the low productivity threatens British jobs. The Halewood workers earn the equivalent of just \$8.25 an hour, including fringe benefits, while their German counterparts make \$13.50 and have been offered a Saturday shift at premium wages to meet the demand for their cars.

With British workers half as productive, even that disparity is not enough and Ford officials calculated a few months ago that it costs \$1,000 more to produce a car in Britain than to make one in Germany and ship it to Britain. That disparity has been kept down by the regular devaluation of the British pound — from 8.75 marks per pound in 1971 to 4.15 now.

Half of the Ford cars sold in Britain are imports and the company is looking to its other European plants for an increasing supply of parts for British assembly plants. By comparison, at Saarlouis recently railroad freight cars backed deep into the cavernous plant were being loaded with trailer after trailer of freshly stamped panels for an assembly plant in Valencia, Spain.

At Halewood, Ford officials have been struggling to improve the plant's poor performance. To some extent, the current economic distress seems to have had the desired effect of not only bucking up management but also convincing workers to become more cooperative.



SHAKE  
N'  
BOOGIE  
MINI  
COATING  
MIX

DIRECTIONS:



Pour contents of Auto Drug Store in plastic bag. Add 1400 lbs. Mini, shake, boogie. PRESTO!



MiniNews is published on a monthly basis by Mini Owners of America, Los Angeles. Deadline is the 25th of the proceeding month. Please send contributions to: Tony Pearson, 625 Geneva Ave. Huntington Beach CA 92648. Phone number,

#### WANT ADS

FOR SALE: 1961 850 with 998 discs, 1275 Austin America engine/trans. Greate black paint. Needs interior work. 3000 dollaes or offer. Coopersmith

FOR SALE: Parting out Cooper S 1275. All or part. Needs piston (+30). Fiberglass front, twin tanks, straight body. Jon Pike , or Pete Smith

FOR SALE: 1967 MG 1100 Sport Sedan 4 door. Good body, motor out. Joe Herman

WANTED: GB rim. One or set of four. John Gilbert

WANTED: Spare tire cover for a Mini wagon. Also, any mag type rim, 10\*5 or 10\*6. Tony Pearson

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