



André MARCADIER



Marcel FOURNIER

Two men, two marques: the artisan's genius

The career of Andre Marcadier, an affable and colourful Lyonnais, began in 1947, building high-quality bicycles using duralumin for the frames. This was a delicate, time-consuming process, consisting first of rolling aluminium sheets into tubing and then welding the entire seam----- a real work of art!

Still on only two wheels, he then switched his talents to competition motor-cycles, building frames around various engines: one of these came second in the 1957 Monza Grand Prix.

Around this time karting began in Europe, and Marcadier soon began building simple, light chassis, something which became a feature of his long and varied career. The overwhelming success, in 1961, of the team from Lyon (Verd, Dumont, Janoray) included the European endurance title.



André Marcadier's career took a decisive step when , in the early 1960's, he met a person who was beginning to make a name for himself in motor sport circles: none other than Colin Chapman, founder of Lotus.

To make motor sport in France an affordable activity, it was necessary, as the English had done, to produce a small, two-seater tubular-chassis sports car incorporating a cheap, small-capacity

mass-produced engine. To keep costs down, this would be sold as a kit.

Marcadier got together with a local-panel-beater, Marcel Fournier, and together they created 'Fournier-Marcadier'. At the end of 1963 they launched what was to become France's first "kit" sports car".



This was a two-seater with an elegant open-top fibreglass body, not unlike the Lotus 23. The engine was located centrally in a superb tubular chassis, which was remarkably sophisticated taking into account the low-cost aim. 3600 enquiries flowed in from prospective purchasers and other interested parties. The model became a great success in competition: Sport-Auto magazine organised a championship around it.

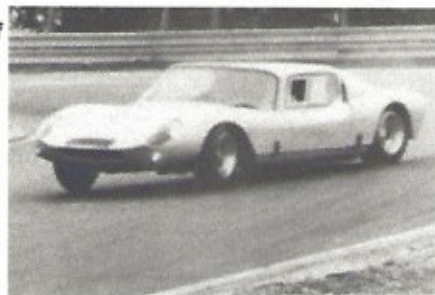


From 1966 onwards, the two colleagues launched a single-seater to take part in the national championships which eventually became known as Formule France.

Like the sports car, it was very light (320 kgs), with a well-designed chassis. The engine was from the Renault 8 Major, which had enough power to make the car quite lively, as testified by Jean-Pierre Beltoise in a test he did for Sport-Auto.

Very shortly afterwards, the car was fitted with a Renault 8 Gordini engine, and achieved several excellent results in Formula Libre in the hands of Roger Cohen, the "works" driver. It even took overall honours against Formula 3 single-seaters!

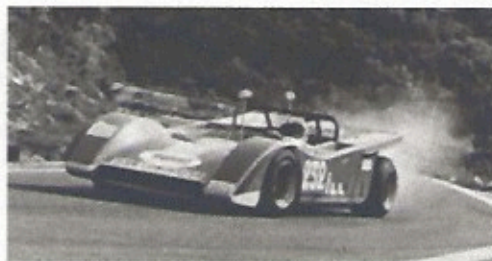
In early 1967, a brilliant development of the open-top sports car emerged from the Lyon workshops: this was the unforgettable Barzoi. It took its mechanicals from the earlier model, but had a roof and doors incorporated, to cater for buyers who wanted a more usable car. Like the Mercedes 300SL, it had gull-wing doors because of its tubular chassis and low height.



The commercial success of the Barzoi shouldn't detract from its competition success: Francois Lacarrau took second place in the 1968 Grand Prix de Paris at Montlhery, against such well-known names as Servoz-Gavin, Wicky, Jungenet etc armed with Matra 470BRM, Ferrari, Porsche 906's etc !

Sport-Auto remembered it as a "David versus Goliath" race, with the little Barzoi, powered by a 105 Bhp R8Gordini engine, up against cars with 250 to 400 Bhp!

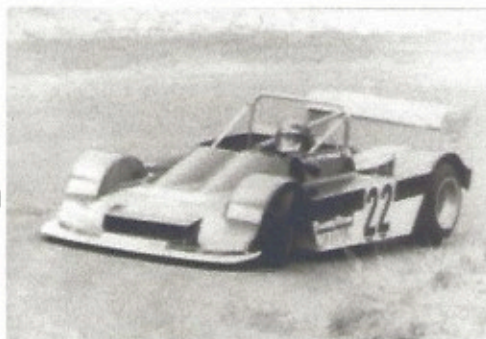
In 1970 Marcel Fournier retired, leaving Andre Marcadier to



continue working away. In the same year he produced a two-seater sports-racer specifically for competition, and which used the Barzoi as its base. This model, called Can-Am after the American cars which inspired its appearance, was the first of a series which allowed talented amateur drivers to have a real competition sports racer at a budget price.

Thus, at the 1975 French mountain-climb Championships, Marcadiers, powered by Renault 8 Gordini 1300cc engines, finished 4th and 5th, up against Formula 2 single-seaters and 2-litre prototypes!

The 1978 season brought even greater success in what was already becoming a more "professional" discipline: Marcadier's final creation, an elegant sports racer powered by a 300 Bhp Ford-Hart 2-litre engine, totally dominated its class and even worried the Formula 2 single-seaters which, due to their handling and low weight, were the quickest cars on the mountains.



The driver was not altogether unknown: Roger Rivoire had been an apprentice at Fournier-Marcadier who, in 1974, had come very close to becoming French mountain-climb champion). The low-budget but talented Marcadier/Rivoire combination won its class on 11 out of 14 events: in the 3 other events the car was using an engine which was "past its prime".



The Barzoi Mk.1 was succeeded by the Mk.2, powered by a Simca 1000 Rallye 2 engine, since by now Renault had ceased to produce the 8 Gordini engine. It was a futuristic concept which, whilst not possessing the grace of its memorable predecessor, nevertheless won plaudits for its road-holding, derived from the competition sports-racers.

In conclusion, history will remember these models as clever designs which allowed mass-produced mechanicals to be fully exploited. Their lightness reflected their build quality, just as their competition success reflected their effectiveness.

But Fournier-Marcadier's greatest contribution was to spear-head the drive to make motor sport accessible to those on a low budget at a time when this was not yet the French sporting priority it was later to become.