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Fifth Newsletter : December 1988

Dear RS200 Enthusiast,

More new RS200s have been delivered in 1988 than in the whole of 1987, and it now seems certain that every car will have been sold by the end of this year. However, although there are ample stocks of parts to rebuild, repair, or recreate the cars, Ford has definitely stated that it does not intend to produce any more new RS200s.

A total of 20 cars have now been sold to Canada, deliveries to the United States and Japan continue to increase, and three cars have recently been sold to Indonesia. Famous ex-Formula 1 racing driver Innes Ireland has ordered four cars, on behalf of his associates.

At the time of writing, the remaining stock of new and unsold RS200s was six cars. (All 20 of the 'Evolution' cars have now been sold). Each of these cars can be re-prepared to left-hand or right-hand drive, road or tarmac 'rally' trim.

Urgent Repairs

If your RS200 ever needs repairs, we are most anxious that the parts should be supplied as soon as possible.

To help you, I have included an example of Ford's new **RS200 VOR Parts Order** form with this bulletin, to be sent to every RS200 owner.

'VOR' means Vehicle Off the Road. If you need urgent help, please submit this form, complete with details of parts required, to your Ford dealer. He will rush it to the factory, and Ford will then rush the parts to you.

The Registrar's Car

I have now just started running my fourth RS200.

During 1987 I ran a Left Hand Drive example, Car No. 073 (Registered C142 JJN). This was sold at the end of the year, and has subsequently passed to its third owner.



For a short period in the winter of 1987-1988, I then ran a Right Hand Drive example, Car No. 127 (Registered E946 BNO). This has now been sold to an ex-employee of Ford Motor Co. Ltd., who has his own promotions business.

From March 1988 to December 1988, I ran Car No. 183 (Registered E994 BNO), a Right Hand Drive car prepared to the 1988 specification. This had the electrically heated/adjustable door mirrors, the optional radio/cassette kit, and was fitted with the same red leather seats which I had used in the previous two cars. It had the 'standard' 250bhp engine, and completed nearly 20,000 miles/32,000 kilometres before being returned to the factory. I understand that it has already been sold, and that it will be delivered to its next owner in the next few weeks.

On 8 December 1988 I took delivery of one of the last few new RS200s, this being Car No. 192 (Registration : F 938 MJN). Although it is a standard-specification car, complete with the 250bhp engine, and the electrically-operated door mirrors, it is special in several other ways:

Not only does it have a radio/cassette installation, and the new Aston Martin Tickford modified-Recaro seats plus matching carpets and door trims, but it has also been painted in Ferrari red. According to our records, this means that just four cars have now left the factory in this striking shade of red (see below).

I hope to be running this car through the whole of 1989, at least.

New 350bhp Engine Kit

A further engine tune-up kit has now been developed, which develops a peak of 350bhp. This adds to the option of retaining the standard 250bhp, or using the 300bhp tune-up kit. The 350bhp kit is now available for sale, for fitment to existing cars.

Starting from the 300 bhp kit, the following new components need to be fitted :

- New fuel injectors
- New electronic 'chip' for the Engine Management System
- New Boost Control Valve (to be fitted to the existing Turbocharger)
- Latest-level cylinder head gasket (if not already fitted to the engine when new).

Note that no changes are needed to the pistons, camshafts, turbocharger, or to the 300bhp exhaust system. However, if the cylinder head gasket is to be changed, it is recommended that the engine should be removed from the chassis to fit the 350bhp tune-up kit and components.

Bob Howe and Terry Bradley, of the Motorsport Department at Boreham, both report that when the 350bhp engine kit is fitted, there is no loss of driveability in the important 0 - 4,000 rpm engine range, and that the modified engine still peaks at about 7,000 rpm.

The car currently used by Bob Howe at Boreham (Car. No. 187 - Registered E30 EVW) is fitted with this kit for long-term assessment purposes. For full details, of prices and availability, please contact Bob Howe at Ford-Boreham :

Telephone (UK) : 0245-469840

Fax (UK) : 0245-468376

Optional equipment now available for RS200s

Here is a summary of the optional extras which can now be fitted to the RS200, along with UK retail prices :

<u>Part description</u>	<u>UK Retail Price</u> (VAT to be added on UK sales)
300bhp engine kit	£605, plus labour
350bhp kit	£1,500, plus labour fitting charges
350bhp kit, if fitted to an existing 300bhp engine	£850, plus labour fitting charges
New Recaro seats, cloth trimmed	£1,500 Fitted
New Carpets	£500 Fitted
New Door Pocket Trims	£110 Fitted
Central Door Locking, complete with alarm system	£500 Fitted
Stereo Radio/Cassette, speakers, and all wiring	£750 Fitted
Rally Driving Lamp Pod	£525, plus labour fitting charges
Air Conditioning installation	£2,500 Fitted

All the above kits can be fitted by Aston Martin Tickford Ltd., Bedworth, near Coventry (UK Tel: 0203-491010), the company which has been responsible for new-car preparation and modification throughout 1988, and which is now taking on more and more service and repair work on owners' RS200s. For all detail discussion about these kits, and about AMT maintenance of the cars, please ask to talk to Brian Tennant or Dave Wood.

In the case of new cars, such kits can only be fitted after the new car has been handed over to its owner, and are the subject of individual contracts between AMT and the customer. This is a British legal requirement connected with Type Approval of the vehicle.

RS200 to go on display in the famous 'Schlumpf' museum

An RS200 is now to become one of the star exhibits in the world-famous collection of cars displayed in the Musee Nationale de France (better known, still, as the 'Schlumpf' museum), at Mulhouse, in France. Mulhouse is close to France's eastern border with West Germany, and is only a few kilometres north of the Swiss border at Basle.

This machine has been prepared and liveried as a 'works' Stig Blomqvist/Lombard-RAC Rally replica.

Operating hints, from experience with Ford-owned RS200s

Both Bob Howe and myself continue to build up high mileages on road-going RS200s. The following advice comes from our direct experience with the cars, and may be useful to owners who regularly use their RS200s on the road :

Checking the operation of the Engine Cooling Fan

The fan is driven by an electric motor; this is thermostatically controlled, and only comes into use when the engine water temperature rises to 100 deg C.

This means that the fan only operates in heavy/slow-moving traffic conditions. However, an inoperative fan could lead to serious (and expensive) engine overheating. From time to time, therefore, it is recommended that you check out its operation, in this manner :

- a) Disconnect the fan motor wires from the joint immediately behind the radiator on the left side of the car.
- b) With the ignition switch 'On', use a piece of wire to bridge the fan connections. The fan should immediately begin to operate.
- c) If it does not begin to operate, check the appropriate fuse in

the Fuse Box behind the Glove Box panel.

d) If a change of fuse does not cause the fan to begin operating again, consult your nearest specialist Ford dealer.

Checking the oil level in the main transmission/transaxle

At all times, keep checking for leaks from the transmission assembly, or from the pipework connecting this assembly to the transfer gears (which are situated immediately ahead of the clutch housing). An easy way to do this, without putting the car up on a ramp, is to inspect your garage floor for oil stains, after moving the car out of the way.

To check the oil level :

a) Make sure that the transmission, and therefore the oil, is at a normal operating temperature, and leave the engine idling so that the oil continues to circulate.

b) Remove the panel in the floor of the luggage box (which is situated up front, under the front body cover). This will reveal the transmission dipstick, which is located at the front of the front differential/transmission casing.

c) With the engine idling, remove, clean, re-insert, then check the oil level indicated on the dipstick. (See page 06-4 in the Owner's Manual).

d) If necessary, top up the transmission fluid using the dipstick hole as a filler neck. **DO NOT OVERFILL.**

Note : The capacity difference between 'Max' and 'Min' on this dipstick is approximately 1 pint/0.2 litres.

e) Don't forget to put the dipstick securely back into its socket before refitting the floor of the luggage box.

A photograph showing the location of the oil dipstick in the transmission casing is included with this Bulletin.

Security when parking your RS200

When parking your RS200, and leaving it unattended, it is not enough merely to lock the doors of your car. Thieves always find it a great temptation to break into an RS200 and drive it away, and they could do it in the same way that they would in stealing a Sierra with similar locks and steering column arrangements.

Earlier this year, Bob Howe's car was stolen from the car park of a

hotel in which he was staying overnight. Fortunately it was recovered the following day; equally fortunately, the thieves had done no lasting damage to the car, though the centre propeller shaft bearing had to be changed.

It is recommended that you should always immobilise your car (electrically) when leaving it unattended:

Having switched off the engine, this may be done by removing the fuel pump relay, and carrying it with you until you return to the car. This relay is the outboard of a bank of three small rectangular components located on the engine side of the passenger cabin bulkhead, on the left side of the car, above and ahead of the fuel filler cap. Without this relay the car's engine cannot be started.

When removing the relay, carefully note which way round it has been located in the socket, for there is only one way in which it can be refitted.

A photograph indicating the position of this relay is included with this Bulletin.

Transmission Drive Shaft Bolts

This advice applies particularly to cars which are regularly driven hard, over long distances.

Periodically, and certainly at every scheduled service interval, check the torque of the Half Shaft Flange Retaining Bolts, both at the front and rear axles, and at the inner and the outer ends of the drive shafts. To ensure the security of these bolts, if ever they have been loosened off or removed, they should be treated to a smear of Loctite when being re-fitted.

In one or two rare cases, where they have been incorrectly assembled, or re-assembled, Ford has found that these bolts can loosen off.

The recommended torque for these bolts is 55 lb.ft/75 Nm

Clutch operation, and feel, in heavy traffic conditions

Bob Howe and the Registrar both do a lot of driving in heavy, stop-start, traffic conditions. After a lengthy period of this, the clutch is sometimes likely to show signs of judder at take-up from rest. This is due to a combination of reasons - the clutch is getting hot, and some clutch material dust is beginning to collect on the splines of the shaft on which it slides.

The onset of judder may be minimised by using the **Minimum** possible

engine revs when starting the car from rest. With a standard (250bhp) engine, and a clutch in good condition, it should always be possible to produce progressive take-up from rest at less than 2,000 rpm.

Using high engine revs to attempt to clear the judder does not work - don't try it !

As was recommended in the Third Newsletter, the clutch housing and splines should always be 'blown out' (using a high pressure air hose) at every scheduled service interval, to get rid of any accumulated dust.

Checking the Engine Oil Level

Because the engine of the RS200 has a dry sump lubrication system, this means that most of the oil normally carried in the Oil Tank (which is positioned immediately ahead of the spare wheel) drains back into the sump under the engine soon after the engine is switched off. This tends to give a misleading (low level) reading on the Oil Tank Dipstick.

Ford recommends the following procedure for accurately checking the engine oil level:

- a) Drive the car until the engine, and its oil, has reached its normal operating temperature.
- b) Halt the car on level ground, apply the handbrake, but leave the engine idling.
- c) Raise the rear bodywork, and prop it open. Remove the engine cover (which also covers the Oil Tank Dipstick).
- d) Switch off the engine.
- e) Immediately take a dipstick reading. (See page 06-3 of the Owner's Manual).
- f) If necessary, top up the oil level by using the oil filler which is next to the dipstick (once again, see page 06-3) - remembering that there is a difference of 9 pints/2 litres between the 'Max' and 'Min' levels of the stick.
- g) Don't forget to refit the engine cover, and to retract the bodywork prop, before lowering the rear bodywork and driving away.

Flashing of the 'Low Brake Fluid Level' warning light

Sensors fitted to the top of both the brake fluid master cylinders (see page 06-5 of the Owner's Manual) measure the height of the fluid

in those cylinders, and are connected to a warning light on the Instrument panel display.

In a recent case, this light began to flash intermittently on and off, on the Registrar's car, a short time before it was due in for routine service. Inspection of the fluid level in the translucent cylinders showed that there had been a significant drop. There was no sign of leaking in the hydraulic systems.

The reason for the drop in levels was clear. Because of the mileage built up on this car, the brake pads were becoming considerably worn, and because of this more of the fluid was needed to compensate for the movement of the four-pot brake caliper pistons. After the cylinders were topped-up, the flashing did not reoccur.

RS200 Colours

When the 200 RS200s were originally built, each car was painted white. This was done to allow an owner freedom to build up whatever sponsor's colour scheme was appropriate.

The majority of new RS200s have been delivered with white bodywork. However, when the Registrar took delivery of his new car (see page 2 of this Bulletin), painted in Ferrari Red, he checked out the list.

Four cars have now been painted Ferrari red :

- | | |
|-------------|---|
| Car No. 138 | This is one of the last few cars, and has still not been sold. Don't all rush at once. |
| Car No. 158 | This is an ex-Boreham demonstrator, originally white, which was painted red at the request of of its second owner, Mr Geoffrey Bloom. |
| Car No. 178 | This car was painted red before delivery to its first owner in Japan, Mr Fukushima. |
| Car No. 192 | This is the new car now being run by the Registrar. |

An RS200 Club gathering in the South of France next year ?

By 1989 every new RS200 should have been delivered. One owner, who lives in the South of France, has suggested that an RS200 Club gathering should be organised, with the maximum possible number of owners encouraged to attend. It is suggested that this gathering should coincide with the running of a major motor sporting event.

I have promised to canvas opinion and report back to the owner. May I ask all owners to take the trouble to fill out, and return to me, the Answer Form ('RS200 Gathering - South of France 1989') clipped to the back of this Newsletter ?

I will report response, and see if the idea of a gathering would be popular, in the next Newsletter.

An RS200 Club gathering at Boreham in 1989 ?

In addition to the above, British RS200 owners have suggested that there should also be an Owners' gathering at Boreham sometime in 1989. At this gathering, it is suggested, not only should it be possible to quiz factory personnel about the cars, and to discuss any problems which may have occurred, but it should also be possible to have driving instruction, and driving demonstrations, and to have your cars assessed by Ford experts.

Would this be an interesting occasion to you ? If so, please take the trouble to return the Answer Form marked 'Boreham gathering - 1989' which is also clipped to this Newsletter, to me.

I will report response, and see if such a gathering would be popular.

Rallycross successes by RS200s in the 1988 season

In the European Rallycross Championship, no fewer than six RS200s, of one type or another, figured strongly in the results of this prestigious series. In the premier category, Martin Schanche (from Norway) finished second overall in the series, Mark Rennison (of the UK) finished fourth, with Pekka Rantanen, Mikael Nordstrom, Rolf Nilsson and Thor Holm in sixth, seventh, eighth and ninth places.

Almost all the RS200s were running in 'E' (for Evolution) guise, with 2.1-litre engines producing more than 600bhp. Most were much lighter than the standard type of RS200, with much-modified suspension, and different transmission internals. At one point during the year Martin Schanche was using a 2.3-litre version of the BDT-E engine.

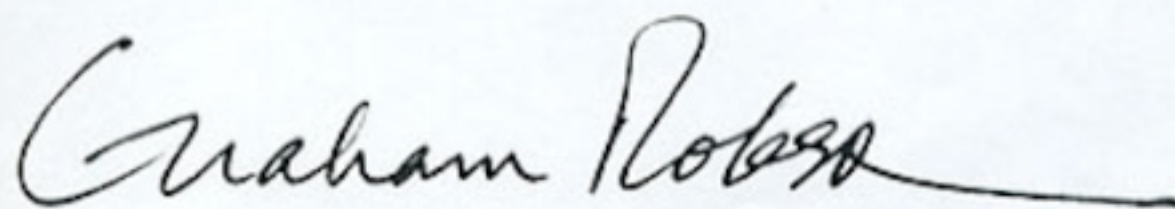
[The only two other makes of car to figure were Peugeot 205T16 and MG Metro 6R4 types].

There were eleven races in the series, of which RS200s won three times (Mark Rennison in Sweden, Martin Schanche in Belgium and the UK), and also notched up five second places.

The British Rallycross Championships - there were two such, one being for British Nationals, one being open to all comers - were both dominated by Mark Rennison's RS200.

At the British Rallycross GP, held on 11 December, Mark Rennison finished second, while Martin Schanche finished third.

Yours Sincerely,



A.A.G. ROBSON : REGISTRAR, RS200 CLUB

