

Zest of Lemon

Few manufacturers were as bold as Porsche when it came to paint finishes in the early 1970s. Export 56's painstaking restoration of this 2.7 RS Touring faithfully reproduces its acid yellow complexion

Words: Johnny Tipler Photography: Antony Fraser

Mick Pacey is livid. He's just discovered that the appliqué Carrera logo on the boot of the yellow peril has a kink in it and will have to be re-done. It's one of two glitches in the final touches of the restoration of this 1973 2.7 RS Touring: the other is the ducktail spoiler, which is a zillionth away from matching the hue of the rest of the car. You wouldn't notice unless it was pointed out, and that's gratifying as you know the whole project's going to be treated to similar scrutiny. 'There are no half measures,' affirms Pacey. 'Everything's had to come off, the engine's been rebuilt, the suspension reconstructed and the Fuchs wheels factory-finished.'

The 2.7 RS is tasty enough to prompt all kinds of self-indulgent culinary metaphors. This lip-smacking lemon meringue pie (if I can put it that way) was one of the first dishes cooked up at Pacey's Export 56 business in its swanky new period premises on the fringe of Newport Pagnell. He acquired the car in Stuttgart, from Gottfried Kadach, a Carrera Cup team owner. 'It was his personal car for 20 years,' says Pacey. 'Then ten years ago he took it off the road to begin its restoration. Halfway through he decided enough was enough and work stopped.' Export 56 picked up the pieces.

The car was stripped to the bare shell, with no windows, glass or lights; everything was present, but individually wrapped. 'We bought it minus wheels, ducktail and seats; all trim removed and engine out. But the body had been renovated to a particularly high standard and, of the work he'd had done, everything was replaced with original Porsche factory parts.'

The 2.7 RS – RennSport – was originally planned as a 500-off homologation special, and the unstressed sections of the 911 bodyshell, such as the roof, front wings and flared rears, were fabricated from thinner gauge steel. The Sport version used plastic bumpers while the Touring model used normal steel items. Unprecedented demand prompted the creation of a further 1080 units, but whether the entire complement of 1580 cars had lightweight panels remains a moot point. Because of the RS's special position in the 911 model line there are certainly specification anomalies: one car may have steel front support bars or opening rear quarter lights and another may not, due to inconsistency in the build process.

RS components can be alarmingly expensive – and even locating original parts is difficult as the factory doesn't hold them any longer. Many RS



KADACH BEHAVIOUR

For twenty years, this 2.7 RS Touring belonged to Gottfried Kadach, principal of Kadach Racing. The team has contested the Porsche Cup since 1989 and the Carrera Cup since 1991, running 964 RSs, and the Porsche Michelin Supercup since 1998. An impressive overall track record includes victory in the Supercup in 2002. Based at Winnenden, Baden-Württemberg, Kadach is running a two-car (997 GT3) squad in 2007, employing drivers David Saelens and Fabrice Walfisch.

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Above: Prototipo steering wheel is an original fitment, as is the Carrera-spec tachometer, with its 7300rpm red line. Maximum power was produced at 6300rpm, but an extra 1000rpm allowed full use to be made of the gear ratios. Interior trim is funereal black



Above: Trademark ducktail spoiler proved tricky to track down - there are many repros around, but few original examples to be had. Licht Gelb paint is typical of Porsche hues of the era. So-called safety colours were the order of the day in the mid- to late-'70s. It all looks good enough to eat, reckons our man Tipler

Tourings have been converted to RS Sport (aka 'Lightweight') specification, not necessarily to improve performance or raise values but because it's easier to source lightweight Sport parts. Our lemon tartlet's managed to buck the trend - though only just. Says Pacey: 'The sill trims were the last the factory had in stock and, although the nearside came from Germany, the offside had to be imported from Japan. The rear quarter bumpers were missing, but luckily I had a pair tucked away in the loft. The trims for those aren't available from Porsche, so they had to be remanufactured.' The litany of expensive and hard-to-find RS items also includes internal door pockets and proper Recaro seats for the full interior refurb, while the rear ducktail also proved surprisingly elusive.

The flat-six was almost entirely rebuilt. 'We re-did the top-end,' says Pacey, 'including new valves and pistons, and we installed the fuel-injection system. There was a problem with the alternator, which meant the battery wasn't recharging, so we fitted a new one. No sense cutting corners with a car of this quality, but finding one wasn't straightforward.' Brakes and suspension were also overhauled.

A resto of this calibre is labour intensive and therefore very costly, potentially gobbling up £100K.

Acquiring the car in the first place could swallow up £70K to £80K, and it might not even have matching chassis and engine numbers. So does that make a restored RS Touring worth £180K? Not necessarily. Export 56 advertised this car for £125K, knowing full well the value of the work that's been applied to it. 'It's all absolutely correct,' asserts Pacey, 'matching numbers, the right gearbox, 80 per cent of its original panels, with just one new front wing and one of the door skins replaced.' He reckons project management

is just as time-consuming as performing the actual restoration.

It's a seller's market as far as rarities like the RS are concerned. As he says, 'beggars can't be choosers.' But he prefers to deal in cars that need work rather than ones that have already been restored. Pragmatism rules. 'I'm not a great fan of other people's work because there will inevitably be things I would have done differently. The market wants correct provenance and specification, and that's what we try to achieve.'

He claims that nowadays it's rare to find a car with a sketchy history, the wrong engine or a colour change. 'Nobody will touch it, regardless of how true the story is. Unless it's for the track or day-to-day use, most people are looking for original 100 per cent correctly-restored cars.' Pacey's not a fan of reproductions, either. 'It costs as much to produce a facsimile as it does to restore the real thing. The two pastiches I've dealt with proved the most difficult cars I've ever had to sell.'

Sourcing good, unrestored cars that haven't been raced, crashed, blown-up or cobbled together is part of Pacey's remit, and on the way to acquiring the yellow peril he looked at 13 RS Tourings worldwide over a 12-month period. They varied from crashed to supposedly fully-restored, and he bought just two. 'I could see the potential of some of the others, but you have to balance the costs against how much time you're likely to be spending on them.'

Niche cars like RSs command top money and attract the most discerning buyers. That is where the market is - the rare stuff that's been well done. You can spend as much time doing a 914/6 as a 911 RS, because parts are just as expensive and as hard to find. The problem for the 914 is that there are more things unavailable than there are for the 911. That's always been a Porsche dilemma; they are all incredibly expensive to restore. Much as I love the cars, I have to be disciplined and keep working at the top end.'

He's pretty disparaging of presentation. 'Nine out of ten Tourings that we've seen have no three-quarter bumpers, no Recaro seats, no standard 911 door pockets - they've all been damaged over time and thrown away. It's far easier to put in a lightweight Sport door panel without door pockets, because trying to source

REBEL YELL

You need some front to sell Porsches right outside the main gates of the Aston Martin factory, but that's what Mick Pacey does. Based in Newport Pagnell, Pacey recently transferred his Export 56 workshops to a new site, a former filling station called Wood Corner, done up like a 1950s' garage on the edge of the Buckinghamshire market town. Exemplified by the 2.7 RS, his vision is to restore classic cars back to their original specification. 'We source cars and components all over the world,' he says, 'including Australia, the States and Japan, and we're uncovering some really exciting cars.' By coincidence, Export 56 has another 2.7 RS to exactly the same specification to restore, a left-hand-drive Touring, currently finished in red. Initially, it, too, was lemon yellow (officially *Licht Gelb*). So will it emerge in its original tint? Refurbishment began on March 1st, so watch this space. Pacey's team is midway through a concours right-hand-drive 2.4 S restoration, and a similar car waits in the wings. There's also a 914 that was an AFN press demonstrator, a four-cam 356 Carrera Speedster coming up, and he's on the point of buying a 904 GTS in the States. 'It's my all-time favourite Porsche – proportionally fantastic,' says Pacey. And prettier than anything built in Newport Pagnell.

a decent pair is expensive.' You'd think that getting the Fuchs wheels right would be straightforward, but it seems lots of people have them colour-coded instead of leaving the spokes in the correct plain alloy factory finish. 'It's probably easier to paint them than to try and get a polished aluminium finish.'


It has a limited-slip diff as an optional extra, and the Fuchs are shod with Yokohamas – 225/50VR 15s on the back and 205/50VR 15s on the front. In keeping with European spec, there's no radio, sunroof or electric windows. The Prototipo steering wheel is original fitment, and it has the proper tool kit and air compressor in its little blue box, plus comprehensive documentation.

It didn't take Pacey long to find a buyer. In fact, you might say that the lemon cordial was almost drunk before he bottled it. 'When I was in Germany looking at it, I took a phone call from Jack Tordoff who, at the time, was very interested in buying back his old 3.0 RS (see 911 & PW, Jan 2007, 'The Hooligan's Accomplice', page 56). I had to tell him it was already sold. However, Jack wanted something to do a bit of leisurely(!) European historic rallying with, something that was really sorted. So I told him about the RS Touring and the plans for finishing it off, and he said there and then that he'd like to buy the car, sight unseen.' But can a 2.7 RS ever be described as leisurely? Perhaps it's a bit more comfortable on a long run than the 3.0 RS,

involving less brute force on its flightier, daintier trajectory, and its pre-impact bumper body makes the 2.7 by far the prettier of the two. As if to confirm the point, post restoration it was just too good to be subjected to the rigours of rallying, and when Tordoff pulled out it was swiftly seized by a UK-based Porsche collector.

Getting the cosmetics right is the icing on the cake – or in this case, the curd on the tart – and that included sourcing the Carrera logos. Pacey: 'There are replica decals on the market, but we found some original ones. We'll be replacing the one on the engine lid...' He's still looking for a proper factory bonnet badge. The list of snags was mercifully sparse. The interior lights didn't work, and the fault was traced to an unattached

and misrouted wire in the headlining.

After its MoT it was UK registered and, aside from its UK plates, the clock's turned back 33 years. In deference to its freshly-squeezed condition we merely trundled round the block, but it's safe to say that, once run in, the RS's performance will be as sharp as its colour. 

2.7 RS CARRERA

Model year: 1973, F-programme

Engine: 2341cc flat-six

Bore x stroke: 84mm x 70.4mm

Power: 210bhp at 6300rpm

Torque: 255Nm at 5100rpm

Weight: 975kg

Number built: 1580 units

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Above: Correctly-finished Fuchs wheels are the crowning glory on a perfect 2.7 Carrera RS resto such as this. Factory anodised finish with black accents is period perfect. Iconic 'Carrera' graphics (below) and discreet 2.7 badging on the engine lid hint at the 210bhp of mechanically-injected flat-six nestling within...

