

# SPECIAL REPORT

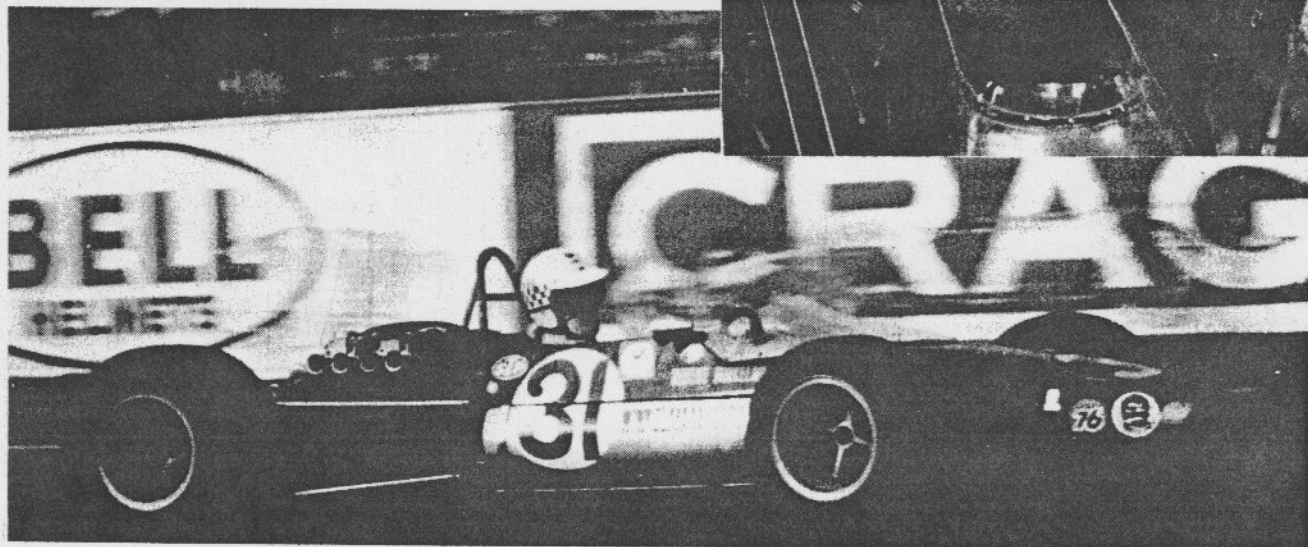
## WINKELMANN ON WINKELMANN

*In the Feb '93 issue of Victory Lane we ran a short article on the sometime confusion between a Winkelmann and Palliser. Bob noted the article and graciously submitted the following to set the record straight.*

### Report by Bob Winkelmann

The first chassis was indeed built by Len Wimhurst at his home in London. At the time Len was working for Brabham, and his frame was undoubtedly influenced by the BT 21 suspension geometry. However, it bore little resemblance in design since the reason Len built it was to test his own theories for a more rigid structure.

In a long career of race car fabrication for other manufacturers he had



**Top: Len Wimhurst & Hugh Dibley with Palliser-Franklen WDA1 Bottom: Bob Winkelmann in the car in which he won two Nationals on the same weekend**

developed many original details which he wanted to incorporate in one car. (I had first met Len at Lola Cars in 1963 when they were building the GT 40 for Ford.

It is a tribute to Len's ingenuity that he was able to do this at his home. He had no bench-vice, he hack-sawed the tubing over his knee, and had so little floor space that he jiggled and welded the frame together on the shop wall.

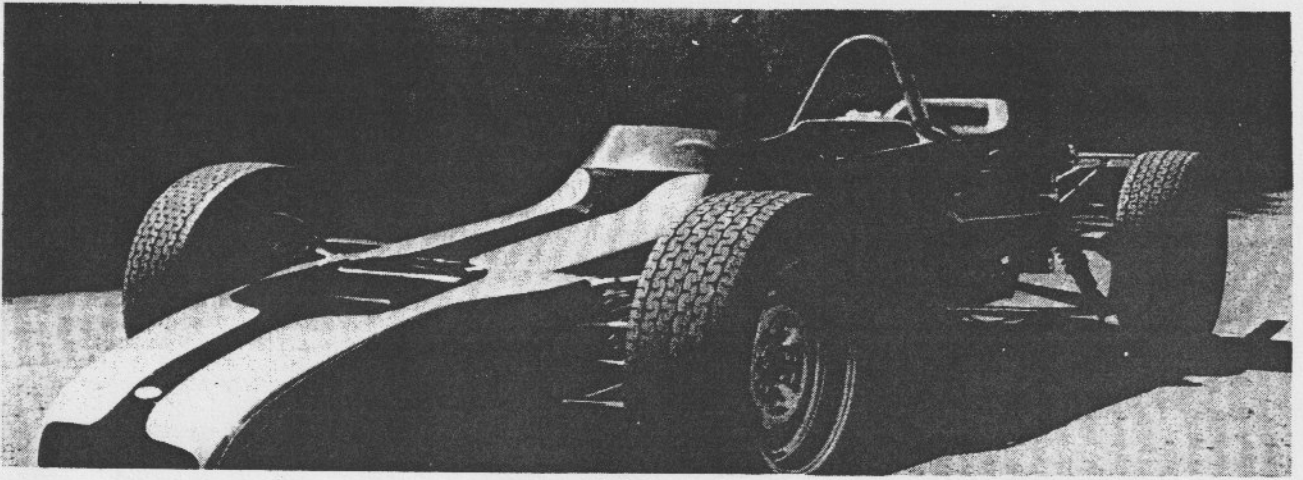
At this point Len approached Hugh Dibley to supply an engine and test drive the car. No name had been decided yet. Hugh entered it at Mallory Park as a TBN (to be notified), and was sufficiently impressed with its performance that he brought a series of photographs to my house in California for a discussion on the possibilities of production.

Hugh and I had been friends for some years, having competed in the USRRC (United States Road Racing Championship) in '63 and

'64. We both served in the Royal Navy: he as a pilot; I as a flight mechanic and had joined British Overseas Airways after leaving the Navy, albeit at a different period since I left England before Hugh joined BOAC.

He was, I believe, the youngest Concorde pilot and was operating London, New York, Miami, and occasional Honolulu runs which gave him the opportunity for lay-overs in San Francisco.

The photos showed a rugged machine. Len had planned for a possible Formula Libre car, and it could easily handle Formula One or Chevrolet engines. All suspension rod ends were half inch, a necessary detail for off course excursions from American tracks. My experience with Lotus and other British built race cars had made me well aware of the delicacy of the frame and suspension components of most marques. Len's chassis was ideal for the US market.



### Palliser-Winkelmann WD F2

We discussed the possibility of going into limited production. I was convinced of the need for a strong single seater, so with Hugh's assurance that some changes could be made to suit my six foot frame, (another drawback to British cars of the day), Hugh returned to London with my initial order for three Formula B cars and formed Palliser Racing Design Ltd.

Hugh's full name is Hugh Palliser Kingsley Dibley, a combination of Sir Hugh Palliser, an ancestor who commanded one of Lord Nelson's ships and Hugh's father, Rear Admiral Kingsley Dibley.

Hugh financed the venture and became managing director. Len was a director and production manager. Hugh and I exchanged courtesy directorships in each other's companies, and I became sales director for the US.

Since my company, Robert Winkelmann Racing, Ltd. had been in business for several years and was fairly well known in the US, it was by common consent that the cars would be called Winkelmanns when sold in America.

The first three Winkelmann cars were delivered in May and June of 1968 to: Dan Murphy of Wisconsin; Rodolfo Junco, a Mexican then living in Austin, Texas, and myself in California, designated

WD-B-1, for Wimhurst-Dibley Formula B, Mark 1. A fourth car was delivered in April '69 to a Mr. Harris, also of Austin, Texas.

During the '68 season a dealership was established in Texas. Registered as Winkelmann of Texas, it was headed by Rod Kennedy and Jerome Shield. Based in Austin these gentlemen were early Formula

Ford boosters and it was in no small part due to their insistence that I urged Hugh to build a car to this new formula. Len was a bit reluctant at first, believing it was a 'fiddler class' for amateurs and would go nowhere. However, I went to London at the end of 1968 with firm orders for ten cars, and by the time of the Racing Car Show at Earl's Court in January '65 Len had modified a B-1 chassis to the new class and we introduced our first Formula Ford to the public.

It is pertinent to the story that of the 41 Formula Ford WD-F-1 cars manufactured in 1969 only one, number 011, was sold in the UK as a

### PALLISER-WINKELMANN

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### Palliser-Winkelmann Formula Ford WDF3

Developed from the highly successful WDF2 Formula Ford, this model conforms to 1971 USA and European regulations.

Chassis:	Multitubular frame. Full harness mountings incorporated Roll-Over conforms to FIA & SCCA Regulations.	
Suspension:	Top link trailing arm & wishbone at front; twin radius rods, wishbone and top link at rear. Fully ball jointed with left and right hand threads to permit simple adjustment. Outboard spring and shock absorber units - ride height and damping action are adjustable. Adjustable strutball bars.	
Steering:	Palliser rack and pinion. Adjustable steering column. Leather covered steering wheel.	
Brakes:	Dual master cylinders with variable balance bar operate Girling calipers onto 98" discs. Formula DS11 pads. Adjustable pedals.	
Electrics:	Lightweight 12 volt Varley battery feeds through master switch. Rocker ignition and starter switches. Lucas Sports coil.	
Instruments:	Smiths magnetic cable driven tachometer, combined oil pressure and temperature gauge, water temperature gauge.	
Cooling:	Crossflow water radiator with external chassis mounted water tubes. Palliser dry sump oil system with rear mounted oil tank/cooler unit.	
Petrol tank:	Seat tank capacity 5 Imperial gallons. (approximately 6 US gallons 23 litres) Fuel cell conforming to FIA & SCCA safety specifications optional. Extra tanks available.	
Body:	Reinforced colour impregnated glass fibre. Wide range of colours. Cockpit dimensions to FIA specifications.	
Transmission:	Hewland MA 8 four speed with reverse. Comprehensive range of ratios. Drive to wheels through Metastatic joints.	
Wheels:	Dunlop LPR23 5 1/2 x 13" (steel).	
Tyres:	Dunlop	
Prices:	Rollin chassis, less engine and gearbox	\$ 3460
	Rollin chassis, with Hewland 8 A gearbox	\$ 4000
	Complete car, standard 1971 updated dry sump engine	\$ 4690
	Complete car, RW based 1971 dry sump engine	\$ 5110

Palliser. The rest were imported, sold, registered and raced as Winkelmanns, fourteen in Texas alone where the ability to accommodate a six foot six corn-fed cowboy was quickly recognized.

I won't dwell on the successes, there were plenty and they are well documented, suffice to say that by the end of the first season three Winkelmann drivers had either won their division or placed high enough to make the run-offs. Meanwhile, eight of the new Formula B cars or Atlantic as it was now known had been delivered to the States. This was the first of the wedge designs, requiring the radiator to lay almost flat. These cars, designated WD-B-2, were all sold here as Winkelmanns.

We had a bit of trouble with the cooling in desert temperatures and two or three different shaped noses were tried. Eventually we got that problem sorted, and the Wedge was here to stay.

The Formula Ford variant of this model, W-D F2 was to be introduced in the January 1970 Racing Car Show, but by a massive effort, on Len's part the first three WD-F-2 Winkelmanns were completed and delivered on the 22nd of November 1969 to the three Winkelmann

drivers who had won spots in the American Road Race of Champions held that year at Daytona. This model was an instant success, (although we didn't win that race.) Many well known drivers got their start in F-2s. They are easy to drive, quite forgiving, robust by race car standards and ... very fast.

In all, fifty WD-F-2s left the works by the front door, 45 came to the States, sold through Winkelmann dealers of which there were now six. At the same time Palliser was also doing a brisk business in component parts, and several other manufacturers used them in the construction of their own cars. Since it was also possible to deal directly with our frame supplier and purchase a replacement frame at virtually our cost, many knowledgeable race car mechanics built pirate versions of Palliser designs and called them Pallisers or Winkelmanns.

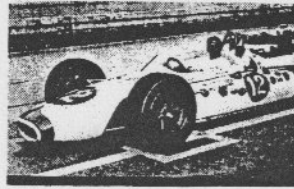
It will never be known how many of these cars exist, nor was it confined to Palliser. Lotus, Lola and Brabham have the same problem, and I enclose a copy of the Brabham news letter which confirms this. However, if it is of any concern to the current owners of Palliser-Winkelmann cars, records were kept of all the cars sold in the States and which dealers sold them. In many cases the names of the first owners are known.

Renny Watt of Portland has very kindly agreed to maintain the register and interested parties can write to him at Box 1727 Portland, OR 97217.

Meanwhile, back in England, Vern Schuppan and Peter Lamplough were running works Pallisers: Vern in an Atlantic and Peter in a Formula Ford, with Hugh occasionally taking time off from flying to tear up track records. Calls and letters from satisfied customers came from all over the States, detailing their track successes and exchanging information about 'demon tweaks' they had discovered to improve performance. All, of course reported back to the 'works' via Telex. Len made variants for Formula Super Vee, of which 5 or 6 were sold. The WD-F-3 and WD-B-3 rolled out of the shop incorporating detail improvements such as extra knuckle clearance around the shift lever and anti-dive front "A" arms. Minor improvements but the same basic car. By this time I had established a chain of dealerships consisting of very knowledgeable people who were providing excellent support for our customers. Parts were available on an overnight basis and quite a large percentage of sales were due to replacing

## Brabham Or Not?

I recently spent a week in England meeting people, looking at cars and of course, researching Brabhams. One of the topics of discussion was the 'replica' Brabhams that were built during the 1960's. It seems that an Arch Motors chassis could be purchased for replacement purpose. The chassis received was identical to what the factory would receive for the construction of a new car, complete with AM number.



The confusion over origin is not limited only to the production formula classes. In 1965 Mario Andretti drove the Dean Van Lines Special to a third place finish in his first attempt at the Indianapolis 500. The car has been listed in some chronicles as a Brabham, but that turns out to be a bit of a misnomer. It was actually built by Clint Brawner and company, copied from the Brabham driven by Sir Jack in 1964. It was officially known as a "Brabham". Nonetheless, it still remains a very important piece of motorsport history. It probably ranks high on Mario's list of favorites, for at that event he was named rookie-of-the-year.

Other cars were constructed using replica/self-built chassis. I now understand that a few cars were even assembled at the factory and left out the back door with AM numbers but no chassis tag.

Fortunately the AM framed cars had some sort of number to be referenced by so they were listed by the frame number during the race meetings of the time. This documentation provides a good history of the car in question. Charles Lucas constructed at least three cars with chassis which were fabricated outside of Arch Motors. The cars had no frame numbers but the original owners were documented. In the photos that I have of the replicas it is impossible to tell them from the real thing.

Later in the week I was doing research at a friend's and turned up frame numbers and owner names for at least four cars. Photos were also provided taken at race meetings in 1965, 66, and 67. Three of the four numbers have stood the test of time and have appeared on currently campaigned historic racers.

This discovery raises some interesting questions. What are these cars? Brabhams? Lucas? Replica Brabhams? I do not profess to know the answers, but would be interested in hearing from the membership on the issue. I do not think that there is any doubt that the cars in question are historic racing cars worthy of the right to compete, but where do they fall in the history of motorsport? Let us know your thoughts on this issue.

Source: Phil Clymer's 500 Mile Race Yearbook

**It seems that Arch Motors Co. built chassis for several groups, the problem lies in that anyone could buy a "replacement frame".**

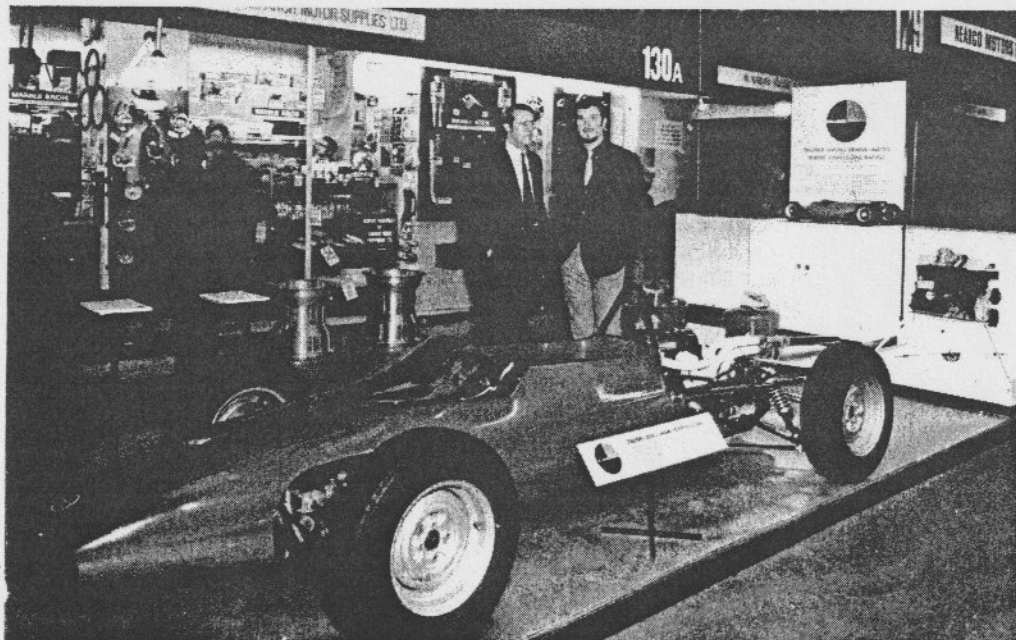
'comers' knocked off by off-course excursions. It had been my policy to sell the cars at little above cost in order to increase the numbers sold and allow the factory to get up to speed and improve efficiency of production. Components however were priced to allow dealers to make a fair profit and the bottom line began to reflect this.

We seemed to be on a roll, but alas, the first oil crisis now loomed, forcing a lot of people to sell their cars and get out of racing. Our suppliers and sub-contractors seemed to have weekly increases in price,

making it difficult if not impossible for us to maintain our lists. We had earned quite a lot of dollars for Britain but unfortunately none for ourselves. Ultimately, Hugh was forced to cease trading and close down Palliser Racing Design.

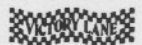
To fill outstanding orders four cars were delivered in kit form directly to our US customers. Designated WD-F4, they were the last cars officially sold.

During our three years of operation, we had focused a high degree of specialized knowledge in combination with enormous enthusiasm to produce these cars. We didn't make any money, but everyone had a lot of fun losing it. That they are still being raced after 25 years is great source of pride and pleasure.



WDF1 Palliser Winkelmann Formula Ford at a car show in London 1969

Bob in white tie behind the car



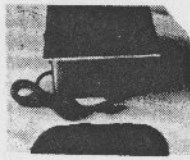


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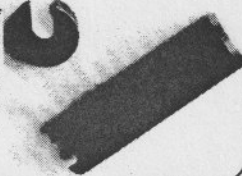
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# WHEN IS A WINKLEMAN NOT A WINKLEMAN? WHEN IT'S A PALLISER

When two Englishmen, Geoff Clarke and John Webb, got together in London's Royal Garden Hotel in December 1966, they could not possibly have had any idea that their discussion would result in the creation of the most successful motor racing category, Formula Ford. It is now almost 26 years since the first FF race was held at Brands Hatch in July 1967. All 14 cars were Lotus, Clarke owned eight of them, and Webb was the Managing Director of Britain's four leading racing circuits, including Brands Hatch. Clarke ran a racing school, and, in an attempt to come up with a single seater that was inexpensive to build and maintain, as well as tractable to drive, he had a Cortina fitted to a F3 chassis with Cortina wheels and tires. Clarke told Webb how well this car had worked and, as the conversation flowed with the drinks, Formula Ford was conceived.

With the success of the formula came opportunities for many racing car builders, among them a company called Palliser Racing Design. Len Wimbhurst built the first Palliser which had been funded by English racing driver Hugh Dibley. "Palliser" was Dibley's second Christian name. Wimbhurst was a former workshop foreman at Brabham, having also spent time at Lola. Dibley and Wimbhurst were co-directors of Palliser along with another Englishman who lived in the USA, one Bob Winkleman. Having seen photographs of the Palliser prototype, Winkleman had agreed to market the car in the States. By the end of 1969, the company had built 42 Formula Fords and six Formula B cars, all of which went to Winkleman. In 1970, 50 more FFs were produced, plus three FBs and prototypes for Super Vee and Atlantic.

I am not sure at what stage Bob Winkleman started to market the cars under his own name, but the numbering system remained, with the WD initials (Presumably from Wimbhurst and Dibley) preceding the car type and model. "WDF1" was the first FF chassis model, the next FF model being F2 and so on. Jim Jenkins won the IMSA Formula Ford series with a WDF2 in 1970. Although most of the cars went to the USA, Peter Lamplough and Bob Evans enjoyed considerable success with the Pallisers.

The Palliser/Winkleman cars were well-built cars with the company noted for its helpful and friendly service. An indication of the company's reputation can be gained from their successful sale components, particularly the cast wheels, uprights and steering racks. Amongst others, March Engineering used Palliser parts, while BRM were users of the Palliser oil pumps for both their twin cam and FF engines.

Now 26 years on Formula Ford continues to be a most successful formula for budding world champions, while the original cars, including the Palliser/Winkleman cars, have been restored to their former glory and are providing economical entertainment for historic racing drivers.

PETER HILL