

TheAlfaholic *Newsletter of the DSARC*

Welcome to *the Alfaholic!*

December, 2008

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

The Deep South

Table of Contents:

President's Column

8C Arrives!

President's Column

Welcome to the new age. Alfa is here. They are on the road. You can go to a dealer and get one. You can even get it serviced. Well, sort of. If you are one of the lucky few who bought an 8c, then Alfa is alive and well. For the rest of us, life goes on as before. Besides, even if they came back full force, do you really think they are going to have gas caps for Milanos or shift boots for Duetto's? Of course not. Another year goes by, and we strive to keep these old cars on the road on our own. To accomplish these goals, we have organizations like this one and we have people like me. For whatever reason, you guys chose to elect me your new president. Not sure why. Really a poor choice. Ok, not really. Besides Andy, I am hoping to be the best possible choice for the next year and beyond. So on that note, you should probably know a little bit about who I am and why I have "the sickness."

It started out on a dark and stormy night. Well, it was probably a sunny Florida day. No matter, I have grown up with Alfas all my life. My parents have had a '71 spider since roughly the time of my birth. I think there was a silver '72/3 in there too. I seem to remember stories about tops that did not leak and head gaskets that did. I do know they had to sell at least one two-seater to accommodate having me around. I guess I owe them on that one. There was also a Giulia (Giulietta??) spider that never ran. Who else do you know who can say their first brake job was on a three shoe Alfa setup?

In my early years, the '71 still ran. It ran poorly, but it ran. Dad would bring me to day care in the spider. Of course, then he had to clean or change the plugs in the parking lot before he could leave. That was back in the 80s. Spica was still a mystery to all but Wes Ingram. Special tools were impossible to get. And all a good mechanic could do was make things worse. Why do we call them the good ole days again?

In '89 we moved to Baton Rouge. The spider was somewhere in south Florida getting some well deserved attention from someone who charged too much to do too little. This is where things started to go down hill. At some point, in time, we picked up the spider. I remember a very wet ride. I had towel duty. Once the spider was parked in

Baton Rouge, it ran less and less. Eventually, the car had been sitting for almost ten years.

As all kids do, I started to grow up. Driving age. No I did not get a car. But I did get a license. When I started driving more and more, I ended up in a hand me down Jeep Cherokee. This was not some junker fifth generation pos Jeep. My parents were the original owners. They were meticulous in its maintenance and cleanliness. As its new caretaker, I did the same. This was the cleanest, most mechanically perfect '95 Cherokee on the planet. I used to wash and wax it every weekend. If it made a squeak or rattle it was off to the dealer for repairs. (I also used to build up some heavy debt with Dad paying for said repairs) These were the days before I knew an oil cap from a radiator. I put a lot of mechanics' kids through college.

As we all know, a Jeep is not an Alfa. So deep inside me a fire was burning. I missed the sounds. I missed the smells. All I had was memories. I used to watch old Alfa videos and crank up the volume just to hear what a spider sounded like. I had never seen any other Alfas except in pictures, but I had a job and that means I had a small amount of disposable income. I started looking around for Alfas. I got in touch with a guy in Florida about a spider. It was a '71. It was rust free and ran like a champ. The top was good too. Wow, what a deal. He only wanted \$1500 for it. I started saving up. Then Christmas happened. Best Christmas ever, I swear!! Mom and Dad got me the car!!! All we had to do was go and get it.

So Britt and I hitched a trailer to the Jeep and went on a road trip. You will never find a kid as young and naïve and excited as I was. When we got to St. Petersburg, FL we went looking for the car. We found the address and made a couple passes that night. The car was there. Even while writing this I get excited. The next day we met the owner and saw the car up close. In my eyes this car was perfect. In reality, it was garbage. The owner had lied about everything. The car was shot. It did not run. Top was intact but dry rotted. The interior was awful. The body was rusted in places these cars do not rust. I should have just packed up and left right there. Instead, I brought the car home. I tried to get it running, but I did not know enough. The car sat at my parents for a few years until I eventually sold it for parts to an Alfa shop.

In the mean time I bought an '87 Milano Platinum. This became my daily driver and the Jeep got to take a break. In reality, the Plat spent most of its time up on jack stands. In the two years I had her I spent over \$5k on parts. I only paid \$610 for the car to begin with!!! Her name was Giuliana. I loved that car!! She was a true Italian lover. All she ever did was give me a hard time and the more she did, the more I loved her. Sigh. At the end of our two years together she was totaled in a front and rear collision on a rainy day. She gave her life to save mine. Everyone who saw the car figured I must have been really hurt. To be honest, I have tripped and fallen harder than the collision felt.

While all this was going on, the club started up again. Andy found me a spider in the woods in MS. Having learned nothing from my first two Alfas I bought the car.... From a dead guy....with no keys. It has been the best so far. I drive it every day. Her name is Abriana.

I also started working on Alfas for a living around that time. I worked at Garcia Alfa Racing for a year. I never got rich, but I broke even. How many people do you know who are so passionate about Alfas they will drive five hours a couple times a week

to work part time at an Alfa only shop. While I was there, I learned a lot. I am no expert by any means, but I can solve most problems and am not afraid to tear into an Alfa. Mostly, I saw I-jet cars. Those were good times. Andrew Garcia also introduced me to racing. I had been auto-crossing for a while, but never seen a race. We worked as crew for a spec rx-7 one weekend and I was hooked. I have not been able to capitalize on this passion yet, but one day!!!

When Giuliana was totaled, I was given enough money by the insurance company to replace her. I bought a Verde from a customer in Houston. She has been a great car. Her name is Maura. It means dark skin in Italian.

When Britt graduated with her Masters degree in Architecture, we moved to Charlotte, NC, where I was starting a degree in Motorsports Engineering at UNCC. We were there for seven months. The school was a joke, but the local club was awesome. I made a ton of friends and got to see some neat cars. One member drove his Junior Z to all the meetings. (Eat your heart out Andy!!)

So now we have been back almost two years. The club was still here when we returned. Some of the faces have changed, but the passion is still there. Now I work as an Intern Architect at a prominent firm here in Baton Rouge. Having a nice job allows me to sink more parts and money into the cars. One day, they will be really nice. Eventually I would like to find a way to make a living in motorsports or street cars. Perhaps this stint as president is taking me one step closer to my dreams. It certainly will be fun!!

Tim Spruill....

You may now call me "Il Commendatore".

President, DSARC

8C Arrives

(Stolen from Hemmings.com by Mike Hemsley)

Exotic Cars

The wait is over

Prominent car collector James Glickenhaus, the man who commissioned Pininfarina to build the lovely Enzo-based Ferrari P4/5, recently took delivery of the first new Alfa Romeo to reach the United States since the last 164 was imported in 1995. This new car is nothing less than the acclaimed 8C Competizione, and it was delivered to its proud new owner at [Miller Motorcars](#) in Greenwich, Connecticut.

Glickenhaus's new 8C Competizione is one of 500 to be built and 85 U.S. spec cars, and all will sport a Maserati-derived 450hp, 4.7-liter V-8 mated to a six-speed paddle-shift manual gearbox. According to Alfa Romeo, "Glickenhaus declared himself particularly proud of being the first American customer to receive an Alfa Romeo. Immediately after the official handover of the keys, the customer carried out a road test in order to appreciate the main technical and dynamic features of his Alfa 8C Competizione."



James Glickenhaus (right) accepts the keys to his new Alfa Romeo 8C Competizione.

For more info on the stunning new 8C, visit www.alfaromeo.com.
- By Mark J McCourt

The new 8C owner is an AROC member and AlfaBB participant, so you can see lots of comments about the car on the BB.

P.S. Write an article for the *Alfaholic* and send it in to me at jmichaelhemsley@hotmail.com! 🌐

