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Cooper Car Co style



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MIGRATION ROUTE

Matthias Boller's Mk1 Cooper S has almost completed a lap of Europe. It was part-manufactured in the UK, assembled in Portugal and now resides in Germany.

Words: Rob Hawkins. **Photos:** Matthias Boller.



Classic cars often undergo a complicated and diverse evolution, whether it's through several restorations, modifications or owners who are spread around the world. The worldwide production of Mini has helped to make its history even more complex but poor corporate record-keeping has not helped restorers.

Take the Mk1 Cooper S seen here. It now lives in Germany with Matthias Boller, who has a fine collection of Minis (we

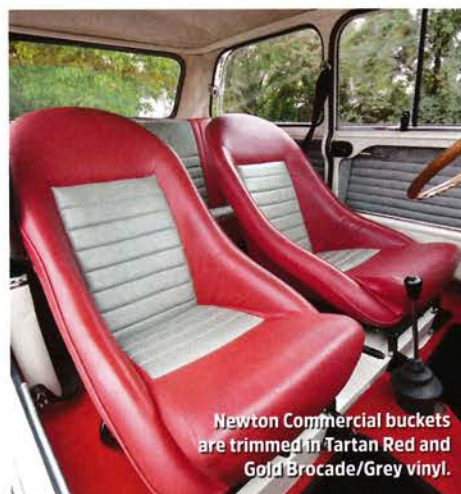
featured his Authi Mini 1275 GT in the February 2016 issue). This Mk1 Cooper S is a CKD (complete knock down) example. This method of manufacturing Minis was launched in the 1960s, with BMC Mini bodyshells and components being shipped to countries ranging from Belgium and Italy to South Africa and Chile. The CKD approach often helped to get around trade embargoes and import duties, assisted by sourcing several components within the importing country and employing local

people to assemble the cars. Australia went one step further, manufacturing the body panels at BMC's Zetland plant on the outskirts of Sydney, along with other countries including South Africa and Italy.

Matthias' Cooper S was originally manufactured in the UK, but was shipped to Portugal, where it was assembled in a factory located in Setúbal, where vehicles from Austin, Morris and Land Rover were constructed. With neighbouring Spain assembling and manufacturing the Authi »



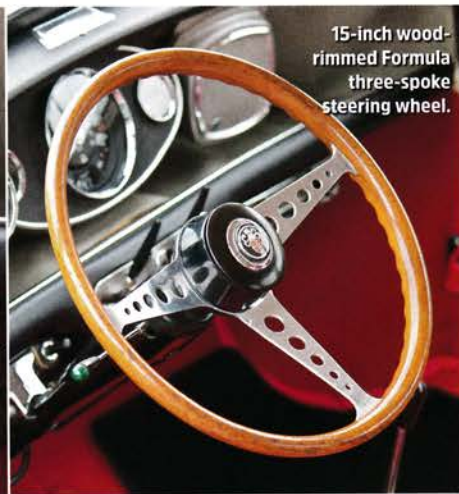
Instrumentation includes 200kmh Smiths speedo with oil and coolant gauges and additional tachometer.



Newton Commercial buckets are trimmed in Tartan Red and Gold Brocade/Grey vinyl.



Becker Europa Traffic mono radio is connected to a Blaupunkt speaker.



15-inch wood-rimmed Formula three-spoke steering wheel.



"I decided to modify the Cooper S to a typical 60s street racer."

US-spec Lucas rear indicator lenses. Reversing light is a Lucas WFT576 item.

OWNER PROFILE

Matthias Boller

Age: 47

Occupation: Aircraft engineer, photojournalist and technical editor

First car:

1980 Mini 850 Mascot

Current Minis: 1971 Authi 1275 GT, 1965 Mk1 Cooper S, 1967 Mk1 Cooper S, 1967 Mk1 Cooper, 1968 Mk2 Britax-style Cooper replica, 1976 IMA, 1984 HLE

Dream cars: A Cooper S Radford de Ville Mini and a Broadspeed GT

Next job on your Cooper S: I still have an old Longman head and a pair of H4 carburettors waiting on the shelf. If I'm in the right mood, this could be the next job



range of Minis, the Portuguese-assembled Minis adopted a similar approach, but on a lesser scale. Consequently, Spanish FEMSA electrical components, including the wiper motor, starter motor, dynamo and voltage regulator, were fitted to the Portuguese CKD Minis. The glass was sourced locally.

Matthias has struggled to find any detailed information on the history of his Cooper S. It has a registration date of 10

March 1967, starting in Lisbon, Portugal, but he has not been able to find any further information on its build date from the British Motor Heritage Industry Trust archive. "Since it is not possible to get a Heritage Certificate for CKD Minis, to prove the correct state of delivery, I decided to modify the Cooper S to a typical 60s street racer," he explains.

He first came across this Cooper S in September 2003. Thomas Adamofsky of Pro Street in Limburg, Germany, was importing Minis from Portugal and, during a club meeting of the German Mini Register (www.miniregister.org), he explained to Matthias that he had found a 1275 Mk1 Cooper S close to Lisbon. It was undergoing a restoration and was almost finished. "The colour combination of Old English White and black is my favourite, particularly as this is not very common in Germany," says Matthias who, at the time, was already restoring a Tartan Red Mk1 Cooper S, which he had bought in 1992 and had yet to drive!

Working as an aircraft engineer for commercial aircraft, he spent the majority of his time abroad at all kinds of airports, so time to work on his Minis was limited. With the Tartan Red Mk1 Cooper S still a long way from being finished, having its bodywork restored elsewhere, the Portuguese import was a tempting option.

Not having seen the Cooper S in Portugal, Matthias and his wife Britta flew

out to Lisbon in October 2003. The owner picked them up from the airport and, as he recalls upon first inspecting the Cooper S: "I pretty much liked what I saw and the S matched in all the major details. To be honest, I didn't come to Lisbon with the intention of buying the S but, as the price was very fair, my wife knew for sure we would have a new family member soon. And, as usual, she was right."

There were several non-original parts fitted to the car, including a 1300 GT engine rather than a Cooper S engine, the Hydrolastic suspension had been changed to dry rubber cones, but, as Matthias explains: "The Austin 1300 GT engine is still the closest engine to an S engine, performance-wise."

Having agreed to buy the Cooper S, the first point to consider was transporting it home. Lisbon is almost 1,500 miles from Matthias' home in Germany. "This was the time to ask for Thomas' help," he explains. "He arranged the transportation of the S through three countries, together with a couple of other Minis. In November 2003, I was working at Bangalore Airport in India when I got an email saying that the Cooper S had arrived in Germany and I could pick it up."

As luck would have it, Matthias received a phone call the following day to say that his Tartan Red Cooper S bodyshell was ready for collection. "Right away I organised

a trailer for my first weekend back in Germany," he says. "One day I picked up the white S, the next day the red S. After many years of abstinence, two Cooper Ss arrived in my garage within one weekend."

The restoration of the Portuguese Cooper S focused on bodywork, paint and an engine overhaul. Most of the other mechanical parts had merely been painted so Matthias soon discovered he had a growing list of parts to renew. He decided to overhaul the brakes, replace the steering rack and renew the radius arms. "Several electrical issues had to be solved and a hazard warning switch was required for Germany," he explains. "Water was leaking through the windscreen seal, the doors needed adjusting and the right-hand fuel tank was leaking heavily and had to be changed."

Once the Cooper S was mechanically sound, he could concentrate on his period modifications plan, particularly on the interior and exterior. Inside he chose to retain the colour scheme of Tartan Red with Gold Brocade/Grey but changed the standard front seats for a pair of Newton Commercial buckets trimmed in the appropriate colours.

The Portuguese-manufactured Kangol front seatbelts were kept, along with the standard set of Smiths gauges (200kmh speedo, oil pressure and coolant temperature) but with the addition of a Smiths 8,000rpm tachometer mounted in a home-made steel bracket. "It was easy to reproduce the original bracket with a piece of sheet metal," he says. "The biggest challenge was to make an exactly round 80mm hole."

The steering wheel was changed for a 15-inch wood-rimmed Formula three-spoke. However, the most noticeable period modifications include a Becker Europa Traffic mono radio, mounted underneath the dashboard, with a single wideband Blaupunkt speaker above it that's fitted in an original housing. "You can find these radios but they are quite expensive," he comments. "The speaker in the original housing is a lot rarer. The sound is not too bad but, most importantly,



Stainless steel lamp bar was manufactured by Cox & Co, who made the GTM kit car.

it drowns out the engine noise."

Matthias has been lucky enough to find some rare parts, such as the Lucas 608 rear-view mirror, which replaced an original light grey Wingard plastic mirror. The Lucas mirror can cost between £600 and £800 on eBay in the UK. He found one in Germany, on eBay, and only paid the equivalent of £30.

Some parts have been re-created, such as the heated windscreen. The silver lines are merely strips of vinyl, which help to cover the radio aerial that's glued along the lower edge of the glass. Clever!

The exterior of this Cooper S also contains several period modifications, including American market red rear indicator lenses. At the front, there are Lucas fogs and spotlights mounted on

an extremely rare Cox & Co lamp bar. "I found the lamp bar at an autojumble," he says. "After some research I discovered it's a one-off stainless steel lamp bar from Cox & Co, who started production of the Cox GTM kit car in 1966 and made several self-developed car parts."

The biggest challenge for Matthias throughout this project has involved sourcing a suitable set of wheels. When he bought the Cooper S, it had original 4.5-inch Dunlop LP883 rims fitted. "A set of Rose Petals were on my wish list," he explains. "This was long before Mini Spares and JBW started their reproduction Rose Petals."

During the summer of 2005, he was working at London Heathrow Airport and visiting as many of the UK Mini shows as »



Matthias designed his own decals using Adobe Illustrator.



Kangol magnetic buckle seatbelts are Portuguese-manufactured.



Matthias bought these rare, second-hand Vortz Rose Petal alloy wheels from the original manufacturer in the UK.



Lucas 608 internal mirror cost a bargain 30 quid.




Twin 5 tanks hold 25-litres each.

possible. "I saw a few Minis on Vortz Rose Petals," he says. "This encouraged me to start looking for my own set. Soon I found the website for Vortz Racing Cars Ltd. Advertised was a set of second-hand Rose Petals." Matthias contacted Nick Vrotsos at Vortz, who was selling the set of wheels for a customer and had to collect them before handing them over. He discovered the wheels were one of only 10 sets from the first batch he produced in 1977. "He couldn't believe that they still existed and that they were in such good condition," recalls Matthias. "He told me the whole story behind these particular rims. They were some kind of pre-series rims for his own cars. Soon after, he slightly changed

the design to the more well-known version."

Matthias has been gradually adding to and altering his Cooper S. In 2013, he fitted the exterior decals, designing the graphics for all of them himself. "Over the years I have taken photos of many sponsor stickers found on Minis," he explains. "I used them as a template and made vector images on the computer with Adobe Illustrator to create each sticker. I'm able to print them to any size I need without losing quality."

Most of the stickers were produced by a local printing shop, whereas others were cut using a plotter, and he fitted all of them himself. The hardest ones to fit were the black Cooper Car Co side stripes, which took about six hours in total.

Matthias now uses his Cooper S whenever the opportunity arises and often drives it to work when he isn't travelling around the world. With an ever-growing collection of Minis, this period modified Cooper S is set to stay in Germany for the foreseeable future. 

Matthias Boller would like to thank:

"My wife Britta, for being so tolerant and giving me the time for all our Minis, and Thomas Adamofsky of Pro Street (www.prostreet.de)."

MiniWorld would like to thank:

Steam Engine Museum (www.bahnwelt.de) at Darmstadt, Germany for the use of their grounds for our photoshoot.

"Over the years I have taken photos of many sponsor stickers found on Minis."



A-series was sourced from an Austin 1300GT and rebuilt, overbored to 1293cc. Twin 1¼-inch SU HS2s breathe through standard paper element air filters.



TECHNICAL SPECIFICATION

Modified CKD 1967 Mk1 Cooper S

Engine: 1275cc A-series from Austin 1300 GT bored +0.020-inch to 1293cc. twin 1¼-inch SU HS2 carburetors. Cooper S forged rocker gear. cast iron inlet manifold. two paper air filters in Coopers steel housing. SU electronic fuel pump. LCB exhaust manifold, RC40 single-silencer side-exit exhaust. mechanical water pump. plastic cooling fan. three-core radiator. FEMSA starter motor, dynamo, voltage regulator. **Gearbox:** Four-speed all-synchro Austin 1300 GT box, remote linkage. 3.76:1 final drive ratio. rubber driveshaft couplings uprated with Quinton Hazell needle roller bearings. **Brakes:** Servo-assisted single-circuit system. Lockheed Cooper S master cylinder. Bonaldi brake

servo. Front: 7.5-inch solid discs, two-pot calipers. Rear: steel spacer drums, brake shoes. mechanical handbrake. **Suspension:** Solid-mounted front, rubber-mounted rear subframes converted from Hydrolastic to dry rubber cones. Hi-Los. telescopic dampers. standard front lower arms, tie-bars. new rear radius arms. **Wheels/Tyres:** Vortz 4.75x10-inch Rose Petal alloy wheels. Yokohama A008 165/70x10 tyres. **Interior:** Tartan Red/Gold Brocade/Grey interior. Newton Commercial front bucket seats to match original rear seat. Portuguese-manufactured Kangol seatbelts. 15-inch wood-rimmed Formula three-spoke steering wheel. Smiths 200kmh speedo, oil pressure,

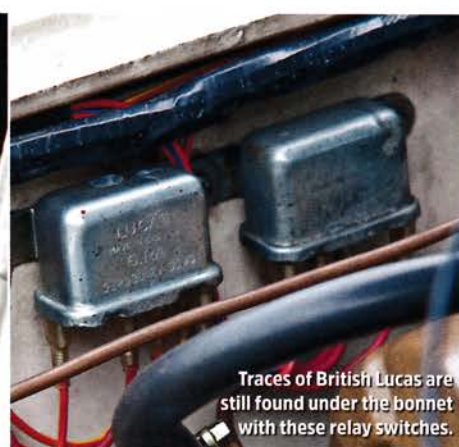
coolant temperature, 8,000rpm tacho gauges. Speedwell switch extensions. Becker Europa Traffic mono radio. single wideband Blaupunkt speaker in original steel housing. Lucas 608 interior mirror. **Exterior:** Mk1 Cooper S bodysell painted Old English White (WT3) with black roof. 6-flute sills. Cooper Car Co. decals, sponsor stickers. stainless steel bumpers, overrides. quick-release Mk1 front grille. Lucas Continental headlights. Lucas Mk1 rear lights, red US indicator lenses. Cox & Co stainless steel lamp bar. Lucas SFT576 front foglights. Lucas SLR576 spotlights. Lucas WFT576 reversing light. Austin Cooper S badges. Deluxe chrome sill and wheel arch trim



Both the dynamo and voltage regulator were manufactured by FEMSA of Portugal.



Portuguese-manufactured windscreen wiper motor is the Lucas equivalent from FEMSA.



Traces of British Lucas are still found under the bonnet with these relay switches.