

Some additional Skinner Specials background history



Peter Skinner driving the modified Red Minor now with Hudson Straight Eight engine - Shelsley Walsh

You will find below the body of an email sent to the website editor on May 24 2006 at a time when the writer **Andrew Harding** was the custodian of the **Triangle Skinner Special**. This car is now owned by the Burlen concern the current rights holder of the S.U. name. While to a large extent this potted history has been superseded by Mike Harvey's excellent new book *Skinner's Union* published in November 2015, it does provide some additional pertinent detail to the Red Minor's story. (Chris Lambert February 2016)

"I'm Andrew Harding the current custodian of the Triangle Skinner Special. I have done a bit of research over the years and can hopefully help with some facts about both Triangle and Skinner Specials.

Triangle Specials were named, as Dutchy says, after the Triangle Service Station in Solihull where Ted Lloyd Jones ran a garage.

The first Triangle was, I believe, the blown Meadows engined one which I think is the one Ken Miles must have driven. It had a very cut-off tail and is shown on the cover of the photography book 'Speed Camera'. It was also driven by Bruce Spollon.

The second was the Triangle Skinner Special which was the development of one of the Skinner Specials- a Morris Minor chassis with a Hudson Straight Eight. The car features on the front cover of Autosport of 22.9.50 with Ken Rawlings (better known as a trials

driver) driving. It went on to be driven by John Derricourt and Arthur Owen.

The third was the 'Triangle Flying Saucer', which was the combination of the scout car chassis with an R/R Kestrel engine behind the driver. As far as the Skinner cars are concerned I'm not completely clear, but there were at least three. Two were based on Morris Minor chassis with blown S.V. engines. The 'red car' was driven by Peter and the 'white car' by Barbara Skinner. Both were very successful hill-climb cars notably at Shelsley.

The former was based on the '£100/100mpg/100mph' Minor used to publicise the new cheapo and retrograde side valve Morris Minor in 1931. When the special block of this car and all the spare ones had all been used up, succumbing to the effects of high pressure supercharging, the Skinners hit on the idea of shoehorning in a Hudson 8 cylinder lump giving around 140 bhp. In this form the car held the record for 'unlimited' Shelsley specials for 1937/38/39. This was the car that Lloyd Jones developed into the Triangle Skinner single seater in the early post war years. There is a chapter about it in the excellent Vintage Specials book by Bateman as well as the Bolster Specials book referred to.

The white car went through John Bolsters hands and ended up with a Ford 1172 engine. It is owned now by David Baldock.

There was I think another Skinner road car with a Hudson engine which I last heard of when it was in the St Austell Motor museum (now closed)"

I hope this helps.
Andrew Harding

