

Mini ID'S

I have just had a running conversation about Copper ID and I began to wonder just what was a Cooper or just what was it that made a mini a Cooper. I know that John Cooper set down the plan for minis to be made into what was called a Cooper, but to day with the motors wearing out and sheet metal repairs and panel replacement going on as a mater of maintenance just what is it that we have here any way?

Take this as a point for discussion for instance. A red Cooper S ID; C/A2s7 xxxxxxx and a green 1275 mini ID; A/A2s7yyyyyyyyy. Both cars have been setting in a storage shed with no miles since new, hence they are original in every respect. Now drive the red one into a garage and the green one into a another garage. Dismantle each car removing the sub-frames and interior. Carry the red body shell into the green cars garage and the green body shell into the red cars garage. Resemble the removed parts onto the swapped bodes, ie. the mini gets the Cooper bits and the Cooper gets the mini bits. Now the red Cooper ID; C/A2s7xxxxxxx has no Cooper items other than the Cooper ID plate. Is the red one the Cooper or is the green A/A2s7yyyyyy the Cooper? Possibly the real question is, who cares. Possible what we would have is two bastard cars.

In "THE WORKS MINIS" page 171 reads the following. "When it comes to quoting registration, chassis and engine numbers for the works cars, readers should bear in mind that Abingdon, like all Competitions Departments, were past masters at maintaining their legal fleet by constantly swopping engine and chassis plates. The following tables were those that appeared on the original log book and those cars that did a lot of events were probably rebuilt with a succession of new bodies and new engines.

I recall a passage in Jack Brabham's book relating the problems he experienced when he showed up at a port trying to enter a country with two F-1 race cars with the same chassis plate number. I have also enjoyed reading a Ferrari Club mag. with several letters from people around the world that claimed to be rebuilding the original Ferrari s/n 0720 TR. Its all good reading but not something that I would like to be betting real money on.
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