

KEEP IT IN THE FAMILY

Having a near death experience whilst driving a Mini might put some people off owning them but not Marc Jäggi...

Words and photos: Jim Jupp



One of the first things Marc showed me when I visited him, in his rather impressive workshop near Bern, Switzerland, was a photo of the aftermath of an accident. The battered 1994 SPI had sustained a seven-roll accident on a motorway. Looking at the pictures it was hard to believe that he is still of this world, let alone still in love with all things Mini and BMC, as well as vintage motorbikes. But when you've had over 20 Minis in your life it's hard to get them out of your system.

He is deeply linked to the Berner Mini Club, who hosted the 2011 IMM, acting as technical guru to the club. Back in 2000 they bestowed the honour of Mini of the Year to this fine example of a Morris Traveller. Impressive indeed, and well deserved in our view. It was Marc who helped put together fellow club member Andy Blaser's green modified Mk2 which we featured in the Summer 2012 issue of *MiniWorld*. Marc seems to be one of the main men when it comes to Minis in Switzerland. »



Thankfully Marc survived this Mini crash.

Marc Jäggi



- » **Dream job?**
The job I have: as a mechanic in a Mini garage!
- » **Worst Moment in a Mini?** A highway accident: the Mini rolled seven times!
- » **Tea or Coffee?** Beer
- » **Hobbies:** Mini, Mini, Mini, skiing, motorbiking, in-line skating, playing guitar
- » **Sum yourself up in three words:** Crazy, family man, car enthusiast
- » **Big engine or big ice?** Big engine
- » **Motorsport or football?** Motorsport. I have co-driven in numerous Mini European Rallies and Mini Winter Rallies with my father and ex-wife. We achieved four wins in the MER Ladies Cup, and three in the Mini Winter Rally.



March has an impressive stock of BMC parts.



Fiesta Yellow looks great in the alpine sun, although it is not the original colour.

If you have been to an International Mini Meet you may well have seen this impressive early Mk1 Morris Traveller. Despite the original 848cc engine not being the best to tackle the Swiss mountain terrain, it does have a 12G295 998 Cooper head which helps when he has the family and camping gear on board. No IMM seems too far as this Woody has even travelled to Denmark. He clearly knows how to get the best out of a Mini as, while hunting for a photoshoot location, it was obvious that this car is no slouch, even with sons Nicolai and Damian along for the ride.

This Woody hasn't spent its entire life in the clear alpine air. Marc purchased the car back in 1990, but it had originally found its way to Switzerland when an English businessman had it imported into the country from the UK way back in 1970.

The Heritage certificate lists this car as having the 16,000th body number. It came off the

Longbridge production line (both Austin and Morris estates were built at Longbridge) in late November 1961 and was built for the home market in Longbridge Deluxe specification (the only spec available for estates). The car was originally painted Tartan Red with a grey fleck and red vinyl trim. It was delivered to Ray Sargeant Ltd, of Henley-on-Thames, in the same month and found its first owner the following January, who kept it in the area until '64 where it headed over to the big smoke of London and Sloane Square. The image of a red Woody bimbbling around Sloane Square in the 60s is certainly an endearing one. Its owner then moved to Switzerland and took the car with him.

This is not a freshly finished project, not that you would guess. Marc has owned this car for 22 years. It was restored to a high standard between July 1997 and May 2000. When it came to the bodywork it wasn't just the usual front end that needed to go. Unfortunately the entire

floorpan had to be replaced too. Panels were shipped over from the UK in a monstrously large crate. He left the bodywork and paint to Bernhard Bolognesi, from Bolognesi Carrosserie in Unterlangenegg, Bern. The early style rounded front valance was refabricated for authenticity. It's a mark of a top restorer who didn't take the easy option of using the later replacement panel with the brake vent cut-outs which were introduced in 1964.

But before anything was replaced it was important to get the shell into a decent condition and clean back the old layers of paint to see what was really needed. Marc opted for media blasting, steering very clear of the sand version and its abrasive, and sometime destructive, effect on flat panels. It was during this process that he came across something quite interesting. "We found on the roof a stamp from the steel plate with the date 10.61." As you might expect »



Smart design: Mini estates have nearly seven times the interior volume of the saloon models.



How cool is this? An original Austin tool board.

THE BUILD



Not only were the inner and out sills shot, but check out the effect of the wood on the bodywork.



Unsurprisingly the A-panels had seen better days.



After media blasting it became evident that a new floor needed to be shipped over.



The new wood kit was offered up before paint. Note the excellent panel gaps



Clean and neat engine bay ready for the 848cc engine.



Note how immaculate it is underneath! The SU pump, as seen here, has now been replaced after failing too often.

“...both Austin and Morris estates were built at Longbridge”



The Traveller seems quite at home in Switzerland. It's a far cry from the busy streets of London.



The immaculate interior was re-trimmed by Swiss interior expert Heinz Bühlman.

the exterior wood trim is not original.

All the remaining work came down to Marc with Gregor Nick, from Nick's Garage (sponsor of the IMM 2011), offering advice and sourcing parts for the project including replacement wood battens from the UK. Although many parts were found in Marc's impressive personal BMC collection.

Practicality and safety improvements have taken priority over originality in a few areas. One addition is the fuel pump. The SU pump, mounted on the rear subframe, failed too often and was ditched for a Pierburg item in conjunction with a glass fuel filter which, to date, have been flawless.

The colour change from Tartan Red to Fiesta Yellow was a personal choice. "At the time there were a lot of red Minis around and I like the Fiesta Yellow much more."

Another safety-related modification was upgrading the front brakes for twin-leading shoe drums, sourced from a 1970 Mini "to get safer brakes with family in the car."

Another neat detail is the use of the original end cap for the radiator, which is something that can be easily forgotten in a restoration. Anoraks will also notice that, because of the move to the 12G295 head, a water temperature sensor and gauge have been added as a precaution. Not such a bad move as Switzerland can get extremely hot in summer as well as the obvious winter chill.

The car runs on a conventional dry rubber cone suspension system with steel trumpets and has done since Mark bought it. Interestingly, according to Bill Bell of the 1959 Mini Register, steel trumpets were replaced with aluminium trumpets in May 1961, six months before this car was built. Even though this is an early Mk1 Traveller it came with the much safer later fuel tank mounted under the car, rather than inside the rear load area. The changeover date for the fitting of the external tank was October 1961 so this was one of the first with that feature and a right-hand filler as standard. The battery moved from the boot area to under the rear seat on the right. This means there is plenty of luggage space for camping gear for an IMM.



The 848cc block has been enhanced with a 12G295 head but kept as original looking as possible, even down to the radiator end cap.

"This Mini is definitely a keeper. Marc hopes to own it for the rest of his life"

So what's the future for this little Woody? During our visit it became clear that Marc and his family really love it and have nicknamed it Kombeli (which in Swiss-German translates to Traveller, or Kombi in German). This Mini is definitely a keeper. Marc hopes to own it for the rest of his life and we're sure that he and his family will enjoy

many more memorable trips with it. 🇨🇭

Marc would like to thank: My father Roland for the frequent help; Marina Jäggi-Schütz (my ex-wife) for waiting on me; Gregor Nick from Nick's Garage (www.nicksgarage.ch); Bernhard Bolognesi from Carrosserie Bolognesi (www.bolognesi.ch); Heinz Bühlman for the interior.

Technical Specification

1961 Morris Mini Traveller

- ▶ **Engine:** 848cc A-series OHV engine . Cooper 998 cylinder head (12G295), painted green . original air filter housing . Lucas 25D distributor . plastic oil filler cap . 1 1/4-inch SU HS2 carburettor . replacement 4-core Coventry radiator, original end cap . late type water pump . dynamo
- ▶ **Gearbox:** Standard three-synchro manual gearbox . magic wand gearshift
- ▶ **Suspension:** Original dry rubber cone suspension . original steel trumpets
- ▶ **Brakes:** Single-circuit non-servo system . Front: twin leading shoe drum brakes (September 1964-on) from 1970 Mini . Rear: drum brakes
- ▶ **Wheels:** Original 3.5x10-inch steel wheels . original wheel trims with D-shaped cut-outs . Michelin 145R10 TL MXS tyres
- ▶ **Interior:** Re-trimmed seats, doorcards (grey fleck and Porcelain Green) . replacement Cumulus Grey carpets in front and load area . new headlining . original bakelite steering wheel . original silver speedo . toggle switch extensions . pull-cord front door openers
- ▶ **Exterior:** Restored 1961 Morris Mini-Traveller smooth-roof bodyshell . Fiesta Yellow two pack paint (YL11) . drip rail . replacement wood battens . replacement wing mirrors . bumper overrides . corner bars (non original) . clear glass indicator lenses



Aston Martin lapbelts.



The ICE install is somewhat limited.



Corner bars were fitted to Minis from October 1962 with the introduction of Super Deluxe trim.