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1 **SMALL WHEELS**

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LP Creation

For the latest in our series of chats with the creators of the models that we all know and love, at the recent Race Retro show we caught up with **Pierre Laugier** of LP Creation.

FSW - When and how did you get started modelling?

PL - My father made model Ferraris in 1:12 scale and growing up seeing him do this, I wanted to do something similar. His models were all in wood and I learned from him. Modelling then became my hobby when I discovered 1:43rd kits in 1984, the first kit being a Tron Opel Ascona 'Publimo' rally car. I was doing my compulsory military service at this time. I showed some of my built models in a shop in Marseilles and a customer immediately wanted to buy one of them. The pleasure for me was the building and by selling this one I was able to buy two or three more kits to build. By now I was working for my father's heating oil business and just building for fun but in 1990 I decided to make models my business and opened 'Kit Miniatures' in Aix-en-Provence, where we specialise in model cars only, a lot like Grand Prix Models but with better weather.

FSW - We know you for building high detail models, what inspired you to take this direction?

PL - First of all I started modelling open road and sports racing cars but I wasn't to the standard of Barnett, Brauer etc and these were not a huge success. I then branched out into high detail F1 produced in limited series of 10 pieces. The first was Damon Hill's 1995 Williams FW17 and this was followed by the Jean Alesi's Canadian Grand Prix winner from the same year. For these I was using Tameo kits as a base most of the time, except for the Ferrari's which were often available only from BBR. The last of these modern F1 subjects were the Renault R25 and Ferrari F2005 as my interest is now more in older subjects because there is so much more to see.

FSW - Do you have a favourite subject and if so, why?

PL - Anything that is interesting to model! The race results are not important but I am very interested in the technical details of the cars. There must be a challenge for modelling, cars like the Maserati Birdcage are great subjects for this reason. This is why I have stopped making modern cars, you cannot see anything.

FSW - Which is the model that you have made that you are the most pleased with or proud of and why?

PL - That's easy. The Maserati Tipo 63 'Supercage'. When my father saw the car he said "You will not be able to make this." so I had to do it to prove him wrong! It took me two years but I did it. This was the first all original project that I started from scratch, working all in brass and the engineering solutions to be solved were particularly satisfying. I finished my scratch built Lancia D50s before this, but the Maserati was started first.

FSW - Do you collect anything yourself and if so, what?

I used to collect Formula 1 World Championship winners, McLarens and the cars of Jim Clark, but I have stopped now. My hobby now is painting and collecting 54mm military figurines, mostly from the French Second Empire (19th Century). I have kept all of my test builds for the limited series models such as the modern F1s though.



FSW - Do you have a favourite base kit maker or base material to work with?

PL - For the series models it would be Tameo for the modern F1s and Renaissance for older subjects like the Alfa Romeo 159 and Marsh for the Can-Am cars. Most important is to have an accurate, well made base model. I also enjoy building Southern Cross Miniatures and Tecnomodel's kits. For the unique pieces that I am now making, I favour brass. It is a versatile classic material. It is nice to work with and it is also beautiful to look at.

FSW - How much time does it take to create a model and how is this time split for research, pattern making etc?

PL - The largest amount of time is spent researching and trying to find information. To make a one off brass model takes about 6 months of full time work.

FSW - What would be a typical working day?

PL - I work normal hours in my shop, so I will be making whatever the latest project is at the counter, taking breaks from modelling to serve customers when they come in. Behind the counter I may be working with a lathe, post drill or hand tools. Only the spray painting is done away from the shop, at

home, because it is too messy and smelly.

FSW - What's next?

PL - The latest series that I am working on are chassis to display alongside existing models. The idea behind the concept came about from a realization that many collectors want the pleasure of viewing the uninterrupted lines and shapes of their models, but also want the pleasure of viewing the chassis and internal workings of the car. However, these two pleasures cannot be united in the one model car without sacrifice. Therefore, why not try to give the collector both?

The next project is the Maserati 450S chassis. There are many more classic Le Mans subjects too, but I am not saying exactly what they are in case I encounter any extra challenges that delay them.

FSW - Do you have any trade secrets that you will share?

PL - There is nothing really that I can tell, other than just to practice and practice and practice. Don't be afraid to try things and fail. Also make a proper plan and blue print if you are detail modelling. If something isn't working, STOP, put it down and do something else. It will often be very obvious and work when you return to it.

