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NEWS RELEASE

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SCIMITAR GTE - 21ST ANNIVERSARY - MOTORFAIR

The Reliant Scimitar GTE, the world's first High Performance Estate, was launched at Earl's Court in October 1968. It was then considered a very controversial design.

The motoring press were divided between those who loved it and others who didn't care for it at all.

The sheer logic of the new formula of car has stood the test of time. The combination of rear passenger head room (not customary in a Gran Turismo car), a large and variable load space (the independently folding rear seats were a novelty), excellent rear vision (one can park comfortably within inches) and the low drag and exceptional cross wind stability endeared it to owners. The rising waistline and 'flip' at the end of the roof were hotly debated design features which have, nevertheless, found their way onto many other cars since then.



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"To produce a novel formula of car like the GTE required a great deal of rapport and respect between the designer and the Chief Executive of the client company - and a lot of guts on the part of the latter," says Tom Karen, Chairman of Ogle and designer of the car. Ray Wiggin, then head of Reliant, was presented with two options: a 'safe' version and the 'estate' alternative. He decided, without a moment's hesitation, in favour of the latter. The reward was that the GTE put his company on the map as a serious maker of four wheel cars with a particularly strong following from professional people of independent character - surgeons, architects, designers, media personalities and last, but not least, royalty.

Ogle are delighted that the classic car and racing specialists, Middlebridge, were alerted to the continued potential of the GTE and decided to carry on manufacture at the Company's plant in Beeston, Nottingham. Improvements have been made to the mechanical specification and the car is now powered by the 2.9 litre Ford fuel injected Scorpio engine.

The new Middlebridge Scimitar can be seen on stand one, level one at the Earl's Court Motorfair, which is open to the public from October 19 - 29.

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Since the launch of the Scimitar, Ogle has expanded both its product and transport design activities. Major products have been carried out on trucks (including the Design Award winning Leyland T45 cabs), vans, buses, trains and aircraft. The Company also makes models and prototypes and carries out development and manufacture of a range of mannequins for crash testing and other purposes. With the arrival of Richard Buckland, Ogle's new Managing Director, the Company is planning for further growth.

Ends

Note to Editors

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