

Quentin



PAUL Bedford has a 53-plate Astra Convertible which has a problem with the hood electronic control unit. Vauxhall say it'll be £600 for a new ECU, but they don't know when they'll get them in stock. What can Paul do? He's missing all the sun!

QUENTIN SAYS: Astra hood electronic control units have been on back order for a long time. Contact ECU-Express on 01782 537703. They know about the problem with the Bertone Cabrio and will repair the unit for around £200 plus postage, including a 12-month guarantee.



Sir Elton & David Furnish raising money for their AIDS charity



'Ullo Elton John! Gotta hue motor?

THURSDAY night at Sir Elton John's White Tie and Tiara Ball saw an Audi A1 sell for a staggering £350,000. Mind you, it was no ordinary Audi, but made over by controversial dauber Damien Hirst. With a stock A1 at about £15k, £335,000 must rank as the priciest paint job ever. Good luck selling that one in 10 years.

Charging ahead... the SLS AMG



A HIGH VOLTAGE MERC

A WHILE back a Mercedes engineer told me that they were working on a mythical electric car which would (in his words) "p*ss all over a Tesla".

Powered by four electric motors, revving to a screaming 12,000 rpm, it smacks out 590bhp and can

hit 60 in 3.7. There's no word on the range from its lithium polymer batteries, or the cost, but it's further proof that velocity-via-volts really can be sexy.

Skoda's Greenline is Fab and frugal

ONE of Britain's best value new cars has to be Skoda's latest Fabia Greenline II Estate.

Prices kick off at £13,750, and the bubbly 1.2 three-pot diesel engine can average an epic 83.1mpg, with a class-busting CO2 of just 89g/km.

Regen brakes, stop-start, low resistance tyres and aerodynamic chassis tweaks have helped create the fabulously frugal Fabia.

On sale from October, you even get alloys, air con and ESP as standard.



83mpg Skoda!

RIVA REAL GOOD SELLER

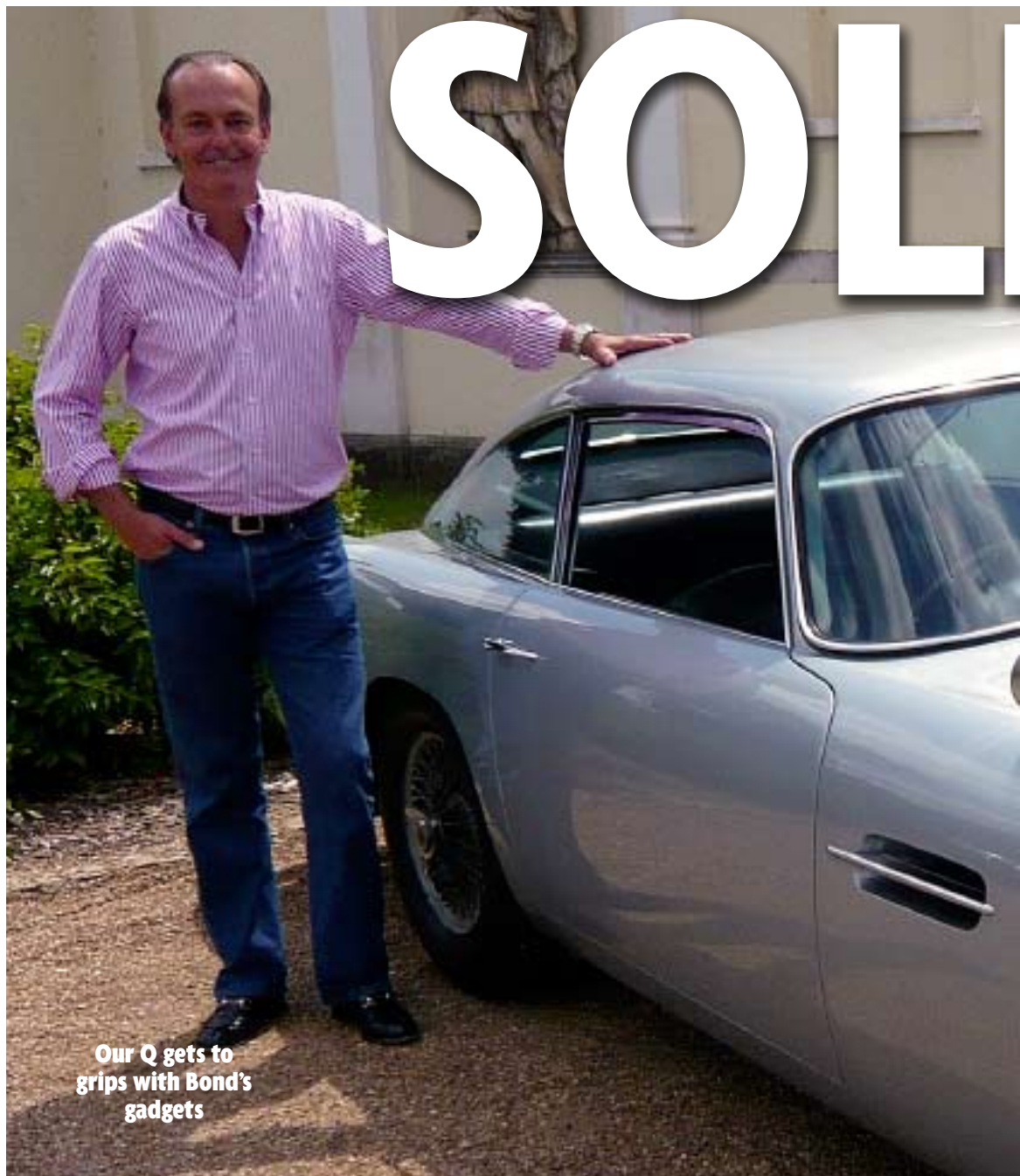
CLASSIC speedboats have been making major money recently, and anything with the iconic Riva name attached is fiercely prized.

think that a 1967 Riva Junior, bought new by Peter Sellers, might be worth a touch more than Bonhams' £25k estimate.

turquoise seats and a 180-horse Chrysler V8, it's the aquatic equivalent of a Pony Mustang Convertible. And what a classy babe magnet...



Classic totty tug



SOLO

Our Q gets to grips with Bond's gadgets

THE DB5 you see here could become the most expensive Aston Martin ever sold, when it goes under the hammer at RM Auctions in October.

Like a Marilyn Monroe dress or Dorothy's ruby slippers from the Wizard of Oz, this isn't just a car, it's a priceless piece of cinematic history that's been seen by billions of people all over the world.

Its story is complicated, so listen carefully, 007... Eon Productions

modified four DB5s for the Goldfinger movie - two were used for promotion and two for actual film work.

One of the film cars was stolen in the mid-90s from a Florida warehouse and tragically broken up for spares, so this car truly is the most valuable Bond car in existence.

I can tell you it drives beautifully, feels as tight as a drum and is rich with a glorious unrestored patina.

And the gadgets show just how creative and imaginative British cinema was in the 1960s. The

Pinewood special effects boffins even predicted sat nav and in-car telephones. Everything still works, except of course the Browning machine guns.

The auction estimate is £3.5million, but my hunch is it won't go to a car collector, it'll be bought by one of those mega-rich OCD types who must have the very best and most unique of everything at any cost.

Get two of them bidding against each other and this car could top £5million.

Gives a whole new meaning to dealing in Bonds.

Willson

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LOTUS HAS ELITE PEDIGREE



Lotus Elite Series I

THIS one's worth buying. A 1979 Lotus Elite Series I, owned by Lotus boss Colin Chapman, is up for sale next Friday at Goodwood.

In fine nick with reams of history and that all-important picture of Chapman with the car outside the Lotus factory, it's got to be worth more than its £10k-£15k estimate.

More at www.bonhams.com



Q LAST year I bought a brand new Rover 75 Tourer that was built in 2003, but sat in a showroom until 2009. After just 2,000 miles, the clutch started to slip, so I took it back to the dealer. They claimed it was my driving style and I wasn't covered by warranty, leaving me with a bill for £640. Is this fair? - *A. Goodacre, Bristol*

A THERE'S something fishy here. Clutches don't fail after 2,000 miles. If the car was standing for six years, it's

possible the friction material had degraded over time, causing the premature wear. Sadly, clutch friction faces, like brake pads, aren't covered by warranty. If you buy a "new" car that's already six years old, you must expect some recommissioning.



D FINGER

Bond's DB5 up for £3.5m



Proceeds from the sale will go to a charitable foundation

Machine guns behind sidelights, overrides as battering rams & spinning number plate

Mondeo man goes green with 'Ecoboost' engine



FORD have debuted their new Mondeo, which gets a subtle front facelift, daytime running lights and a tweaked rear end.

There's a posher cabin with more kit, plus a new 237bhp 2.0-litre Ecoboost engine that's slated for the next-generation Focus RS.

Other changes include dual-clutch Powershift transmission, lane departure and blind spot warning systems, and a clever thing called Active Grille Shutter, which controls airflow to the radiator, reduces drag and helps the engine warm up more quickly.

The latest Mondeo is due in October and prices should be similar to the outgoing model.

A Bentley bargain in budget market



THE prestige market has gone very quiet. Glass's Guide are calling it a phoney war, where buyers wait to see if there's any post-budget optimism, or if prices will weaken.

Auctions are subdued and bids are few. A mate took advantage of the current lull and bagged himself the cheapest Bentley Continental GT in the UK.

An 04-plater in green with tan hide and 70k miles, it started life with a new screen price of £110k, but he gave just £33,000 for the car. At that money I'll take a dozen.

Stop quicker with sunflower oil..

FROM July you can buy Michelin tyres impregnated with sunflower oil. Claimed to increase grip and improve handling, the Michelin Primacy MXM4 will stop 19ft shorter than its competitors, because the oil maintains the rubber's elasticity. What next? Snow tyres from shallots, or low profiles from leeks?