

FEBRUARY 1993

# *Excellence*

**A Magazine About Porsche Cars**

*CARRERA CUP CAR DRIVE REPORT*



PORSCHE

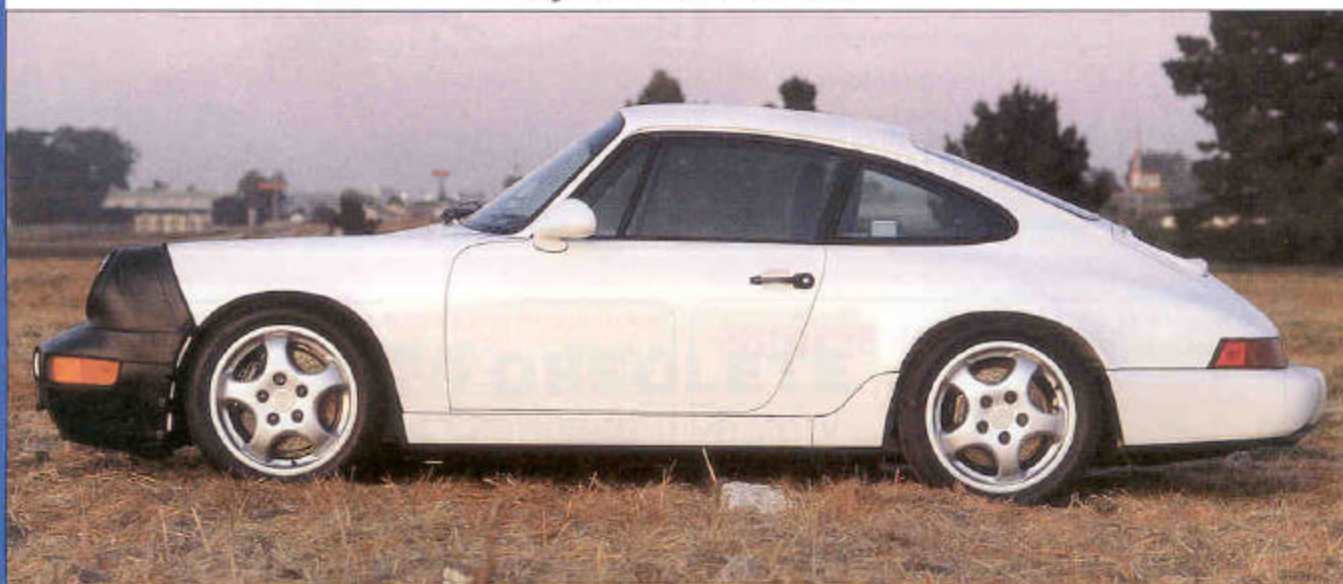


# PHANTOM

OF THE

# CARRERA CUP

by David Colman



MFD BY DR. ING. H.C. F. PORSCHE AG 09/92  
GVWR 3693 GAWR FRONT/REAR 1499 / 2315 LBS  
THIS VEHICLE CONFORMS TO ALL APPLICABLE U.S. FEDERAL MOTOR  
VEHICLE SAFETY, BUMPER, AND THEFT PREVENTION STANDARDS  
IN EFFECT ON THE DATE OF MANUFACTURE SHOWN ABOVE  
FR. OF GERMANY WPOAB296XNS420572 PASSENGER CAR  
76470111231

*...from the race series that wasn't comes the car that isn't. Not since the Interscope Indy Porsche of 1979 have so many slaved so long to accomplish so little.*

*Photos by author*

ndyCar WeekEnd. I'm feeling sluggish, but its probably just a low adverb count.

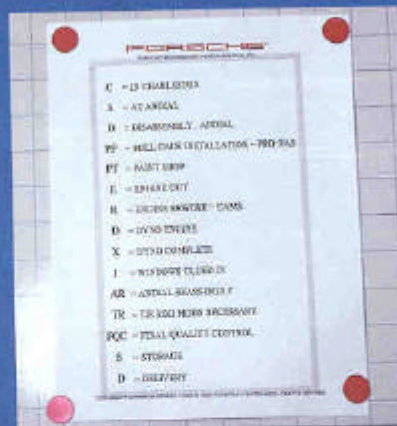
Trooping around Laguna Seca ("dust" in Spanish) can become tiresome, but the antidote is at hand. The last of the 25 911 C2s built for the stillborn Carrera Cup Series is mine for the weekend.

In a gesture of inexplicable generosity, Don Patterson picked up his new Porsche on Thursday and turned it over to me on Friday. Would you cut a check for \$78,340, and then turn your undriven, rare, pristine Porsche over to a stranger of dubious intent? With commendable calm, Patterson never flinched as he watched his unenjoyed toy disappear into rush hour traffic on 101.

This one pitches like a cinched bull, brutally converting expansion strips to speed bumps. What a stroke of luck I foreswore that last cup of coffee. The tag dangling from the key ring reads "Cup Car." An I.D. bracelet that validates this 911 as Porsche's turn-key race car. This is a special Porsche, built for track events never held, then converted to street legal trim. The roll cage, Momo wheel and Recaro seat may be gone, but the suspension modifications remind you that this 911 is still very special. Cupcake is on parole at long last. After the demise of the series, the Carrera Cup cars were incarcerated at Andial pending shipment to Porsche's port-of-entry facility at Charleston, South Carolina. There, factory technicians performed the tasks necessary to restore these Carreras to saleable form.

The cancelled Carrera Cup left 25 orphaned 911s looking for a home. An additional 20 were shipped to Andial but never converted. 44 were white and one was red. Don Patterson bought the last of the converted/unconverted cars, number 25. In exchange for a lot of money (\$78,340), Porsche sold him a Carrera 2, (WPOAB296XNS420572) with a plaque identifying it as the last of the phantom Carrera Cup cars.

While that price might seem expensive for a Porsche that has been through the mill three times, just consider how much effort and expense this example of entropy actually represents. First, it was built with special attention on the production line at Stuttgart, since it was designed from



(left) The big board at Andial tracked every stage of the Carrera Cup car's journey from port-of-entry (C) to delivery to customer (final D) -- unfortunately, "D" never took place

(below) Rear deck of the Carrera Cup car is identical to partial shelf of the RS America, but below the covering the plates for mounting the roll cage still exist



the outset to be a Cup car. Porsche then shipped it to their U.S. racing arm in Santa Ana, California, Andial (Porsche Motorsports North America) for 12 days of effort to bring it up to snuff as a full race car. Figure that the cost of labor at Andial adds about \$10,000 to the price of the car. Then add in all the additional special equipment installed there and you end up with a Cup Car selling for \$100,000.

When the series was cancelled because, among other reasons, the cars didn't sell, much of the good stuff installed at Andial was removed at Porsche's P.O.E. facility in Charleston, South Carolina. Figure another 12 days (\$10,000) of labor for the decommissioning process to run its course. If you add the labor charge of \$20,000 to the price of a Carrera 2 (\$63,900), your total of \$83,900 exceeds what Patterson actually paid for the car. Maybe \$78,340 is something of a bargain for a Carrera with such a well documented history of inertia.

And so, from the race series that wasn't comes the car that isn't. Not since the Interscope Indy Porsche of 1979 have so many slaved so long to accomplish so little. The phantom of the Carrera Cup has returned to square one with precious little to

show for its circuitous journey but a trail of paperwork, shattered dreams and broken promises.

It all started so propitiously when the factory decided to build a version of the European Carrera RS for an American Carrera Cup program. A run of 45 Carrera 2s received the following treatment at the factory before being sent to the United States.

- Aluminum hood
- Deletion of body cavity wax and sound-deadening components (except floor pad and roof)
- Sport flywheel
- Steel synchronizer rings in gearbox
- Revised spring rates and struts
- Recalibrated brake system rates
- Manual steering
- Master electrical kill switch in front trunk
- Partial electric seats
- No rear seats (package shelf)
- No sunroof, air conditioning or power mirrors
- Racing electrical charging system
- 36 ampere hour battery
- Racing type engine mounts
- Adjustable sway bars
- Seam welding
- 3.6 liter engine rated at 256 horsepower

These Cup cars destined for the



*After Andial shipped the cars out for installation of the roll cage, they began installing a new electrical system, a different suspension, an on-board fire system and related safety equipment*

United States were unlike the two versions of the RS (Basic and Touring) sold in Europe. While the adjoining table outlines the precise differences among the three types, the major objective for U.S. cars was to keep them street legal for importation purposes. Thus, all 45 came over with government mandated safety gear intact. Air bags, side door impact beams, Bosch DME and catalyst, full safety glass, and standard issue impact bumpers were fitted to every American Cup car. In addition, these Carreras carried central locking and alarm systems and ABS brakes. Because of NHTSA resistance to importation of race cars that could be sold as street cars, Porsche was determined to import only street legal Carreras for the series. There would be no possibility for these to be tabbed "Gray Area" cars like the 959. As it turned out, Porsche's perspicac-

ity left them with legally imported cars to sell after the unexpected cancellation of the Cup.

Once the 911s arrived at Andial, the real work of converting them into race cars began in earnest. Alwin Springer and Dieter Inzenhofer oversaw an operation headed up by Mark Popov-Dadiani, which took the factory platform and turned it into a proper race car. The most time-consuming modification was the roll cage installation, which was actually subcontracted by Andial and performed elsewhere. The following tasks took 110 hours at Andial:

- Front and rear struts and springs were changed to Carrera Cup specifications
- Rear trailing arms and spring plates were swapped from left to right sides
- Original seats were removed and one Recaro racing driver's seat

was installed with six-point harness

- Interior trim items were removed to allow for installation of full roll cage
- Front strut brace was added between shock towers
- ABS on/off switch added
- Rear brake pressure regulator valve removed
- Front bumper shocks removed
- Driver's window net installed
- Main and final muffler replaced by tuned exhaust system
- Heater blower motor removed
- Safety electrical kill switch installed on front cowl
- Cam cover stud and transaxle stud replaced with drilled studs to accept anti-tamper seals
- Racing clutch disc installed
- Front oil cooler fan removed and baffle installed
- Horns relocated

## COMPARING THE TWO VERSIONS OF THE EURO-CARRERA RS TO THE U.S. CUP CAR

	<b>EURO-RS BASIC</b>	<b>EURO-RS TOURING</b>	<b>U.S. CARRERA CUP</b>
Flywheel .....	Lightweight .....	Double Mass (same as C2) .....	Lightweight
Clutch .....	Steel Spring Damper .....	C2 type .....	Steel Spring Damper
Underseal .....	None .....	Standard .....	None
Windowlifts .....	Manual .....	Electric .....	Electric
Seats .....	Racing .....	Standard Electric .....	Standard Electric
Steering .....	Manual .....	Power .....	Manual
Glass .....	Lightweight (except windshield) .....	Lightweight (except windshield) .....	C2 Type
Exterior Mirror .....	Manual .....	Electric .....	Manual
Battery .....	36 AH .....	72 AH .....	36 AH
Weight .....	2712 lbs. ....	2866 lbs. ....	2891 lbs.
Horsepower .....	260 .....	260 .....	256
Wheels .....	7.5 J x 17 F. 9 J x 17 R. ....	7.5 J x 17 F. 9 J x 17 R. ....	7 J x 17 F. 8 J x 17 R.
Tires .....	205/50 ZR 17 F. 255/40 ZR 17 R. ....	205/50 ZR 17 F. 255/40 ZR 17 R. ....	205/50 ZR 17 F. 255/40 ZR 17 R.
<i>Additional</i> .....	No Fog Lights No Central Alarm Lowered 40 mm ABS .....		Impact-absorbing Bumper Door Beams Air Bags Central Lock/alarm Fog Lights Seam Welded

- Front decklid drilled to accommodate hood retaining pins
- Driving lights replaced with plates
- Original front (7 x 17 in.) and rear (8 x 17 in.) wheels replaced with 8 x 17 in. (front) and 9.5 x 17 in. (rear) Carrera Cup rims. Longer studs and spacers added to rear axle
- Engine modified and dyno tested at 271 horsepower, then sealed along with transmission

By the time the first 25 Carreras graduated from Andial's finishing school, a considerable duplication of effort had already transpired. For example, the struts received from the

factory — which were already non-standard items — were replaced again in Southern California with more radical racing componentry. The electrical kill switch fitted by Porsche in the front trunk was relocated to a point just beneath the left side of the windshield at Andial. Much of the trim installed at Porsche was deleted at Andial. I recall seeing bins and bins of parts lying around the shop at Andial which contained parts taken off the Carreras received from Europe. Wiring harnesses, brackets and suspension pieces were removed and inventoried as the process of modification and simplification continued. As Ed Triolo, then Vice President of Marketing Communications for

Porsche remarked, "The concept of importing the vehicles as street cars and changing them to race cars didn't help the overall cost of the cars."

When Porsche failed to romance a major sponsor for the series, Triolo announced in early May, 1992 that the series would not take place. That decision left 25 completed Cup cars sitting at Andial, with no purpose in life. When Porsche decided to reconfigure them as street cars, almost everything installed at Andial was removed at the Porsche facility in Charleston. Off came the racing struts and springs, the Recaro seat, the Momo wheel, the roll cage, the ABS on/off switch, the window net, the

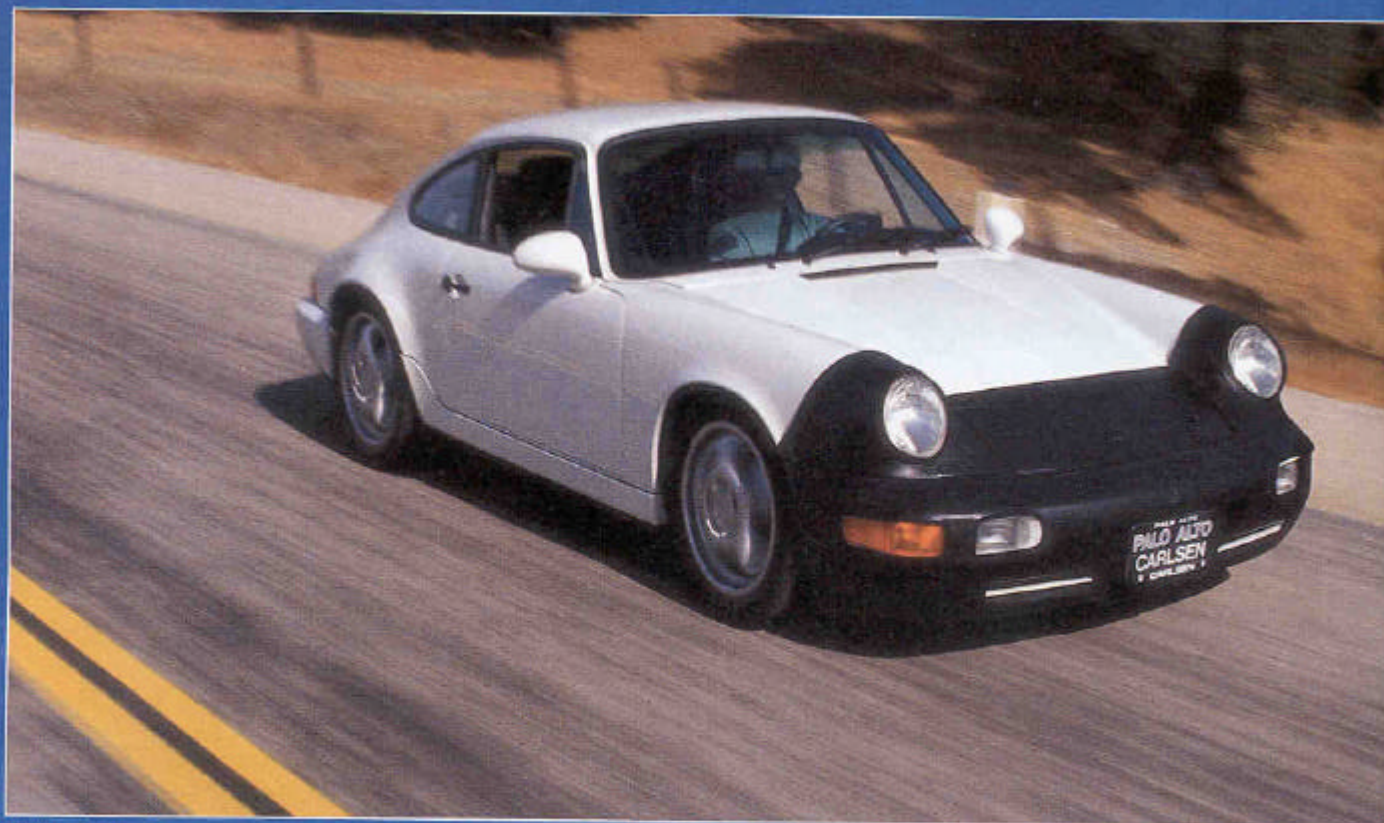


Photo by Robert Bruce Duncan

exterior electrical kill switch, and the hood retaining pins. On went the standard airbag wheel, the electric front seats, the front bumper shocks, the rear brake pressure regulator, heater blower motor, and the original European RS suspension pieces front and rear. The motor and gearbox remained sealed units, albeit with a different Motronic chip than the one which produced 271 horsepower.

All this means that the Cup 911 I drove was far removed from its state of tune when prepared by Andial. Nevertheless, it was a decidedly more energetic Carrera 2 than you can buy from your local dealer today. The reasons are that the 25 converted Carreras are halfway between a true Cup racer and a stock U.S. specification Carrera 2. For one thing, at a listed weight of 2,891 pounds, these retreads are still considerably lighter than a standard 1992 C-2 coupe, which weighs 3,031 pounds. Even the "lightweight" RS America, weighs 2,954 pounds. So Patterson's car is 63 pounds under the RS and 140 pounds lighter than any other Carrera 2 available. Secondly, the engine is producing more horsepower than the standard C-2, and even

the "window" sticker lists 256 horsepower as its output. To me, it felt stronger than that, and a good guess would put it somewhere between 256 and 271. At any rate, the lower weight and higher power give this car more punch than you will find in any Porsche save the 3.6 liter turbo which is on its way for 1994.

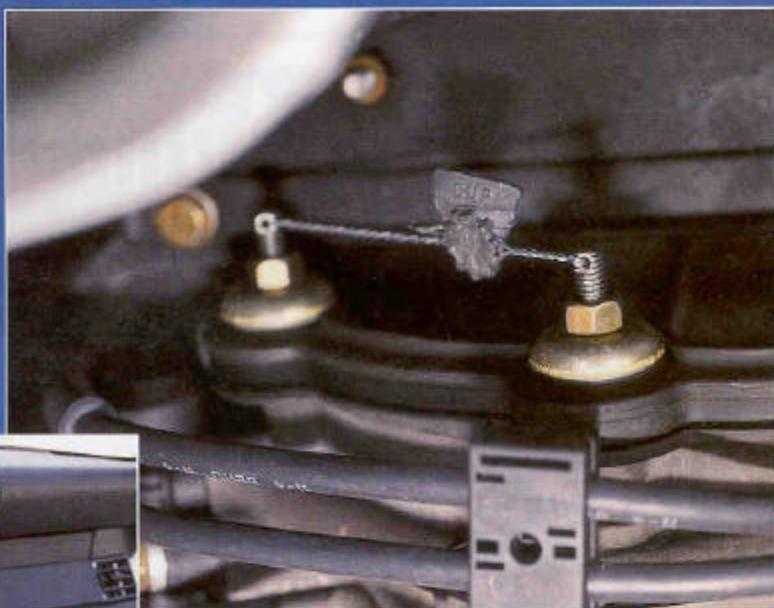
The handling of the reconverted Cup car is superior not only to the standard Carrera 2, but also the RS America. Patterson's Cup car is a rough riding beast, with solid reflexes, great predictability, and virtually no trailing throttle oversteer. Even in its current detuned state, it skips around a great deal over bumps, and generally requires a high level of attention from the driver. The RS America is slightly more forgiving of stupidity, and not much less tenacious in grip. Still, for the fanatic, the Cup car is the preferable hot rod because it communicates its next move just a bit more precisely than anything Porsche would normally authorize for street use in America.

The paroled Cup car is in fact closer to the European "Touring" RS than it is to anything sold in America. According to power and weight fig-

ures alone, the two are quite similar. The RS Touring weighs 2,866 pounds and makes 260 horsepower, while the Cup car weighs 25 pounds more and makes 4 horsepower less. While the Euro RS offers power steering, the Cup car still has manual steering which is a boon if you have beefy forearms, but a detriment if you don't. One holdover of the conversion is the racing clutch disc installed at Andial. From my experience, it doesn't suffer fools kindly. Slip it the least little bit, and your nose will inform you of your sin. Just jockeying the car into photo position provoked the clutch into showing me its stinking badge. After that episode, I quickly learned the drill: hold it in or let it out, and forget in-between.

Even so, there were times when it would act up without apparent provocation, which led me to conclude that the racing disc, steel spring damper and sport flywheel combination look better on paper than they work on the road.

If you decide to buy one of the remaining Cup cars, prepare yourself for a 911 with squeaks, because this car has been taken apart and put together more times than an Erector



*(above) In order to maintain strict legality, each Carrera Cup car was fitted with anti-tamper seals on both engine and gearbox*



*(left) Andial originally deleted both air bags and factory steering wheel, and then to return this car to stock specifications Porsche had to reinstall original equipment*

set. That carved-in-granite feel you covet from Porsche is decidedly absent in the Cup car. It squeaks, it groans, and it darts about on its own agenda.

Although cantankerous, this 911 is more challenging to drive than the standard Carrera 2. Forego some of the current refinements and let the Cup car return you to a more raucous time of 911 development. It's a cross between a 911 R and a 2.7 liter 911 RS Touring. Crude but fun.

Because Porsche recognizes the Cup car may fail to meet the quality and longevity expectations of their typically picky buyer, they have drafted a disclaimer for the prospective customer to sign before purchase. It explains that the car "was originally designed to be street legal, but capable of use for competition. Therefore, this vehicle was originally built to lightweight standards for possible competition use." The waiver outlines the following deviations from standard trim:

- aluminum hood
- elimination of body cavity wax, undercoating and sound deadening
- sport flywheel

- steel synchro rings
- different struts and springs
- different brake calibrations
- manual steering
- master electric cutoff in trunk
- partial electric seats
- no air conditioning
- rear package shelf
- no sunroof
- racing charging system
- 36 AH battery
- racing engine mounts
- manual mirrors
- adjustable stabilizer bars

In view of these modifications, you are informed that "this vehicle will exhibit different ride, cornering, braking and interior noise characteristics which are considered normal." Porsche states that "said vehicle may not have the fit and finish quality of a regular production 911 Carrera 2."

In addition, "the electrical system is not designed for short trip driving and that such use may result in a dead battery." If you are willing to accept the Carrera Cup vehicle "as is, with all faults," and are further willing to absolve Porsche of any failures which might arise out of competition use (which they deem "inherently

abusive of any vehicle"), then they will accept your check for \$78,340. That figure includes a \$13,740 surcharge for the "Carrera Cup Edition" option. And finally, Porsche asks you to acknowledge that the typical Corrosion Limited Warranty for 911 series vehicles is "NOT APPLICABLE to this vehicle."

So buying a Cup car is as much an adventure as driving it. Forget the riding mechanic, but bring your lawyer. If you care to deviate from the norm, put one of these detuned warriors in your garage. It's a rare opportunity to own a Carrera 2 that is different from the herd, with weight and horsepower and heritage ratings that will insure its collectibility status in the long term.

Considering the fortune Porsche spent on the meticulous process of preparing and unpreparing each one of these cars, \$13,740 seems like a bargain surcharge for such an unusual 911. After all, this "Carrera Cup Edition" isn't some contrived marketing ploy dreamed up by the factory, but a genuinely limited offering of a unique vehicle. The 25 Carrera Cup cars mark a sad footnote to a chapter of Porsche racing history that was never written.