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First Track Day

A Car Control Compendium

Rallye Coverage



Contents

18

FEATURES

- 5** Letter from the President
- 6** A Car Control Compendium
- 12** Fifty Years... of Rally Fun
- 14** Don't Lose Your Head!
- 15** A Thoroughly Modern Rallye

- 18** Luftgekühlt - the Power of Air
- 24** First Track Day
- 32** The Social Scene
- 33** 2019 Chicago Region Calendar
- 38** Concours Judges School 2019
- 42** Road America
- 46** Backroads: 1969



24



6

On The Cover and top of page: Luftgekühlt.
Photos by Ingo Schmoltdt



Luftgekühlt – the Power of Air

by Andy Bizub*

It was surreal: hundreds of giant, matte-white wind turbines spinning relentlessly in the Palm Desert gusts, and me tearing westward on the I-10 from Palm Springs in a client-friend's Emory Special Speedster—"yep, it's real," I would answer regularly over the course of the upcoming week—and thus began my very first "Luft" experience. . . .

Going to Luftgekühlt was a confluence of business and pleasure, but because it would take place over Mother's Day weekend, executive dispensation would first be required. A minor eye roll notwithstanding, dispensation was granted, so I booked my flights and selected lodging at a "charming cottage" in Pasadena, both close to L.A. and Luft-related activities, and with a private driveway where my friend's Emory Special could be safely parked.

Tuesday was travel day, and after landing, I stepped out and into a gorgeous Palm Springs evening: dry, mild, perfect. The next morning, I head over to OMAG Automotive to meet Ludwig, the proprietor. After a short tour, he introduces me to the Emory Special, and oh, man, is it gorgeous. A blend of 1960s SoCal cool and Stuttgart techno perfection, it was just begging to be wrung out. And the sound? Deep, burbling, and LOUD, but no drone, and it takes me all of 90 seconds and three turns to realize what makes the Special so, well, special.

Heading towards L.A., I drop south toward Lake Elsinore onto a stretch of great, twisty road, where I pull off to take the first of many pictures starring the Special. On tap for the rest of the day are stops at various performance and restoration shops with which I've connected over the years. We talk Porsches, custom builds, performance, and then it's up to Pasadena, where I find that my first ever Airbnb is exactly as advertised. Sweet!





On Thursday morning, I'm off to North Hollywood for a visit to Emory Motorsports, which is truly hallowed ground.¹ Everyone is gracious, but knowing they have a significant project scheduled to leave the shop tomorrow, it's thanks all around and then I'm gone. Later, it's Newport Beach for a pre-Luft party at the home of Kevin Lynch, a fellow who, among other things, founded a project to place young people into the automotive trades. On the street outside, the cars are impressive, but because it's Luftgekühlt weekend you know what's favored! Fast forward, after many pictures are taken and social media communiqués posted, it's back to Pasadena, though I take a circuitous route to avoid the dreaded I-405, so it's all at speed. And because I arrive well after dark, I shut the engine off and coast to a stop in the driveway to avoid waking up my hosts with that unmistakable "song of the six!"

Friday morning, I meet up with fellow PCA-C member Nate Grede for a trip west to Newcomb's Ranch, a roadhouse well-known for its weekly breakfast meetups of Porsche owners, fabricators, restoration artisans, drivers, and just-plain enthusiasts. Attending this gathering was a goal that I'd set for myself long ago, but never did I imagine that I'd arrive in a hand-made, 356 custom build like this Emory. Who cares that it's only 50-ish degrees or that there's no heat in the Special? Sacrifices must be made, so faster than fast, we're there, and hanging out. But wait! There's more! In the middle of our fabulous breakfast, an original 1962 356B Super 90 suddenly roars into the parking lot, and out steps PCA-C member Pamela Brundage, who drove solo from the Land of Lincoln after her car was accepted by Luft 6 for display! How cool is that?

The rest of Friday is occupied with visits to North Hollywood custom shops, vendors, and other professionals, including a trip to Esposito Porsche Repair to replace Pamela's failing clutch cable. Afterward, I head for Beverly Hills to meet Nate, where the hotel valet takes one look at the Emory and says, "I will just leave it right



here, Sir." Perfect, and since I only stay long enough for a quick club soda at any rate, I'm off quickly to the Petersen Automotive Museum, where the deep burble of the Emory's exhaust turns more heads than a GT3RS. I pull in next to a line of original 356 coupes on display, near Rod Emory's new 356 RSR turbo build. Old and new, stock and wild outlaw, it is truly a breathtaking assemblage.

continued on page 20

¹ <https://www.emorymotorsports.com/?limitstart=0>

The Best One Yet

by Nate Grede*

I'm sitting in a grassy area of Universal Studios Backlot, beverage in hand. There's a pristine, short wheelbase 911 in front of me, a 1950s era service station that's been "Porsche-fied" to my right, Paul Newman's Le Mans 935 in the street to my left, and in 1985 (or 1955 depending on your perspective) Doc Brown of *Back to the Future* is dangling in peril from the clock just above me. "The best one yet," I remark to no one in particular.

That phrase—the unofficial tagline of Luftgekühlt—is well-deserved. An all air-cooled Porsche event, founded by Patrick Long, Jeff Zwart and Howie Idelson, Luft has evolved from a few dozen cars gathered in a random L.A. parking lot, to hundreds of the rarest, most storied, and beautiful air cooled Porsches in existence. It's now a carefully planned and orchestrated production, and thus fitting that this year's event would take place at the famed Universal Studios Backlot. Which, of course, is where I found myself on the Saturday morning of Luftgekühlt 6.

But that's not where my Luft adventure started. The Porsche community is generally a welcoming one, so when I told my friend and fellow PCA-C Club member Adam Kern that I was going to Luft 6, he put me in touch with Andy Bizub of Midwest Performance Cars, who also planned to attend. Fast forward a few weeks and now I'm deep in the hills of the Angeles Forest, shouting superlatives and riding shotgun as Andy pilots a Rod Emory Special Speedster to a breakfast with fellow Porsche enthusiasts. And shortly after we arrive, in comes Pamela Brundage, yet another PCA-C member, whose 356B Super 90 had shared adjacent spaces with my 911 at the CheckedItOut 2018 event held last year in Chicago! And later that same Friday we would all find ourselves at the Petersen Automotive Museum's pre-Luft 6 party, where Rod Emory revealed his new 356 RSR build. And, of course, all of us were there for Saturday's Luft, the stunning details of which are laid out in Andy's adjacent article in this issue of *The Scene*.

My last thoughts, while sitting in the grass at Luft 6, and later that evening on a plane back to Chicago, were of confidence and pride in being a part of that same line of Porsche excellence and camaraderie that binds Stuttgart to Chicago to L.A. And notwithstanding a Luft spirit and style that was nurtured in California, I was and am confident that the same Luft spirit will continue to flourish in Chicago! ■



Saturday: 75, sunny, and time for the show, so after arriving at Universal Studios, we enter the Backlot and step into streets and settings that are immediately recognizable to anyone who's seen a Hollywood movie, sit-com, or TV drama any time between the 1950s and last week.

Where does one even start? Well, we enter a quaintly named set called "MODERN N.Y. STREET," and see a beautiful Oak Green Metallic Ruf with a luscious green interior that looks like something you'd see (and admire) on any modern New York street. Yet as the scale and scope of this "exhibition" becomes apparent, I realize that unless we take a systematic approach to experiencing this event, we won't catch a fraction of what's here: there are dozens of 100-foot-long sets with names like "WEST VILLAGE STREET," "LONDON STREET," and "WALL STREET," each containing 3 to 5 truly eye-popping cars in gorgeous settings. The light bulb finally having gone on, I head back to the nearby ROYAL CRESCENT DRIVE set (a block of London row houses), see a mint green 911 RS, next to Pamela's 356, which is next to a Minerva Blue '79 930, the owner of which is delighted to share its story with me! Next is a vibrant field of 914s, including Hurley Haywood's 914-6, Number 59. It's then a short hike up to "WESTERN STREET," a set that could easily have been the spot where Clint Eastwood as William Munny in *Unforgiven* gunned down Little Bill Daggett and his posse in a Big Whiskey saloon! No illusion, though, is a nearby Gulf 917 Le Mans winner set below a New York theater marquee, which itself is directly around the corner from Paul Newman's own 935 Le Mans ride. These cars, like many others in this exhibition, are both iconic and absolutely compel your reverent attention.



The last display of the Luft day for me is the Courthouse Square from *Back To The Future*, and it's all here, though Porsche Classic outfitted their crew in 50s period dress, occupying the old service station and providing a vintage PORSCHE sign to dress up the station. It was both perfect and a perfect close for the day, and after I met up with Pamela (again) and fellow PCA-C member John Westra, also out for the event, we headed to Marina del Ray for a wind-up at The Motoring Club. Suffice it to say that John and I each had a turn folding ourselves into the tiny back seat space of Pamela's 356, which, by comparison, made the Emory Special's rear quarters feel positively spacious.

Early Sunday morning I'm back on the road to return the Emory and head for the airport. The Emory takes it all in, though, with a deep and exhilarating exhaust note. It's an exciting car to experience, and by the San Geronio Pass, with only a handful of the windmills now turning in the morning stillness, I am both humbled and honored to have participated in an adventure that—like so many memory makers do—came together only at the eleventh hour. 🍷



* With apologies, the cost and page limitations imposed by the printed version of this magazine required that we substantially abridge the articles that Andy and Nate submitted. However, both articles are available in their entirety online at the Club's website, at <https://pca-chicago.org/cms/>. Thanks to all for your understanding. —The Editors.