

It's always interesting to read the thoughts and opinions of readers. Why not put pen to paper and share your views with the kit car world via *Backchat*?

PILGRIM PERSISTS...

CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR article *Tale of a Pilgrim* on page 60 of your February issue. With kit manufacturers and kit magazines so heavily interdependent, it was a brave move to publish the article, even if it was effectively the opinion of one of your readers rather than attack by yourselves – I think the article spoke for itself.

At least it may have cleared up the mystery of your requests for Sumo owners to write to you if they had any problems with their cars. I suspect it may also have solved the mystery posed by reader John R Preston in *Backchat* in your December issue – and to think that I had a Pilgrim 3000 on my shortlist.

Nevertheless, I am extremely surprised that Pilgrim has turned out to be the manufacturer in question, as there are so many of their products on the road, especially if you go back to the Bulldog. I really fail to

understand why such a long-standing and apparently successful company should behave in this way.

For the benefit of the industry, I hope that Mr Tanner will have the opportunity of replying to the complaints.

*Bl Fry
Basildon
Essex*

● *True, Pilgrim Cars has indeed supplied lots of kits in its time and no doubt there are hundreds of satisfied customers out there. But this doesn't excuse lousy treatment of even the odd one or two customers. Interestingly, the Bulldog you've mentioned was itself the subject of a recall by the Vehicle Inspectorate several years ago.*

Mr Tanner can of course reply to us about Alan Howell's disastrous experience any time he wants! – Ed.

SUPERBUG MAKES SENSE

I READ WITH INTEREST THE report on the cheap and cheerful Banham SuperBug in the February 2001 issue and was delighted that at last there's a well-styled, well-finished but affordable and relatively insurance-friendly kit car available.

I'm sure that this, and any cars of its ilk, will help to attract more young drivers to the delights of kit car building and motoring. To my taste, the car could do with more sporty styling, even if an insurance-friendly donor will never match its looks, but to many I expect the SuperBug is just the kind of

car they've been hoping for.

With the SuperBug, the newly launched Fereday Vario and probably a host of others to come (maybe), it seems that kit manufacturers have finally awoken to the huge market that must be there for cheap kits. More upmarket manufacturers will probably feel the benefit, too, in a few years time as it's these cars which secure the industry's future by bringing in new blood.

*Ray Taylor
Kingston-Upon-Hull
Humberside*

AND AGAIN...

IT HAS BEEN MY AMBITION for some time now to own another sports car, having in the past owned four MGs, the most treasured of which was an MGA 1622cc which I drove for more than 10,000 miles.

After visiting the Exeter kit car show at Westpoint last year, very local to me, I was very impressed with many of the kits and cars on show. After a lot of thought and the downloading of much information from the web sites, I decided that a Cobra replica was the model for me, preferably a Ford donor based kit with a Rover 3.5 power unit. Having owned in the past three Rover V8s, I found the bodies gave up the ghost long before the engine, which was a very reliable unit!

I was now focused on the firms that produced such a kit, and after a lot of further reading and research I decided that the top of my list was a Sumo offered by Pilgrim Cars, with Dax coming a close second. Others also to be considered were Fiero Factory, AK Sportscars and Classic Replicas' Viper.

It was, however, just my good fortune last week to call at VH Smith's in Tiverton on passing, looking for any gen on kit cars when I spotted Which Kit?, which I purchased. Later that evening, when I sat down to some good reading, I just could not believe the article I came across entitled *Tale of a Pilgrim*. In fact I had to read it twice for it to sink in. I just could not believe that any firm could treat a customer in such a shoddy manner after the customer had spent £12,800 on a factory produced model.

I can only think that Pilgrim Cars possibly does not want any further business, which has resulted in me very firmly crossing them off my list and throwing their glossy brochure into the laugh-and-tear-up tray where it belongs! I only hope that others who read your

article will follow suit. We can surely do without these type of firms in the kit car industry.

I believe from my research that Pilgrim Cars has produced more Cobra replicas than any other firm, and one would expect a high standard of backup after purchasing a car/kits from Pilgrim, but it just goes to show that one needs to do a lot of research into this kit car business, and the reliability/reputation of the suppliers, before parting with one's brass – information which can only be obtained from good magazines like yourselves. I was a little bit suspicious about Pilgrim inasmuch as they charge £1 a minute if you ring them up for advice on any of their kits. This is the only company that I have so far found operating this system of support (bit of 'Rip-off Britain' do you think?)

Thanks for saving me, in publishing his experience, from a disaster like Mr Alan Howell's, I sincerely hope he was adequately recompensed for his monetary loss in the deal. I look forward to collecting the March issue of *Which Kit?*

*Peter Smith
Tiverton
Devon*

● *At the time of writing, Alan Howell had still not received the damages and costs awarded to him by the court against Pilgrim – despite having the bailiffs sent in. Alan has written to us again about his further experiences and, all being well, will possibly publish his letter in our next issue – Ed.*

● Opinions expressed in readers' letters on this page are not necessarily the opinions of the publisher.