

Larrousse took turns in testing the car with different set - ups. This car was shown to journalists at the Paul Ricard circuit later on in the year.

With a favourable response from the top brass the study was given the green light to continue. Prototype 2 was built with the



production style of superstructure rather than the fabricated one employed in the first car. The suspension was modified and this was borrowed from the R5 Alpine coupe and the rear from the A310 V6 Group 5 car, but reinforced. Where to put the spare wheel was a problem so they had to lengthen the front end of the car to get it behind the radiator and then vent the bonnet to help with the cooling. The third car 822.03 was built and was developed for Group 4 and would compete in the Giro d'Italie in 1979. (What is of interest is that some of the engine development work was carried out in a disguised Lancia Stratos during 1977).

Although the very first design was sketched by Marc Deschamps, stylist at Renault, the making of the first styling model was entrusted to the Italian coach builder Bertone and some design input was made by Marcel Gandini of Muiira, Countach and Diablo fame. Between the parents Renault's Rueil research department and Turin there then began a tremendous to-and-fro traffic, because Renault remained entirely in charge of the project the new cars aerodynamics were tested at the Renault Sport factory and in the wind tunnel at St. Cyr.

Eventually the Bertone design was declined in favour of the French company Heuliez based at Cerisay, they had retained as much of the original Renault 5 profile and incorporated it into the styling, this is what Renault had wanted all along.

THE ENGINE'S 2.0 LITRE EQUIVALENT.

For the engineers there were three options to consider: First of all there was the Renault 30 V6 engine which although was tried and tested did not meet the criteria of the appendix J regulations with regards to weight. It stated that the minimum weight limit for a 2.6 litre engine car was 945 kilos. Next to be considered was the 4 cylinder 2 litre Douvrin engine as found in the Renault 20, this was ideal in size but proved to be too long.

The last option was the Gordini 5 1397 cc power plant and the permissible weight limit was 810 kilos for competition use, this was ideal. For its sporting career, an engine of 2. litres displacement seemed to fit the bill best of all. With an all-up weight of 1785 LB, the Renault 5 Turbo would be competitive. For cars in Groups 1 to 5 inclusive, the rules of the sport dictated an equivalence coefficient of 1.4 for turbocharged engines (that is, their actual cylinder displacement would be deemed to be multiplied by 1.4 when allocating the car to a particular capacity class), and the 1397 cc engine of the Renault 5 Gordini /Alpine corresponded perfectly to what was required. Multiplied by the coefficient this figure would produce the notional engine capacity of 1956cc.

For the cars interior the starting point was a design for the fascia, made in December 1977. In the circumstances an assembly of hexagonal

