

Even this giant-killing performance could not disguise the fact that Group B in full swing had caught the imagination of many manufacturers. Ford, Peugeot, Austin Rover and Lancia etc. were all hinting to the press that they were developing 4WD, mid engine designs generally aping the successful Renault 2WD concept, but with of course now with 4WD. Still playing second fiddle to F1, Renault's Rally team budget precluded them from any such development work. So in early 1984 it was decided to maximise the R5 Turbo's potential. Other people who must receive a mention are Bernard Mathen and Dany Snoeck.

As mentioned in section 7 Group B regulations some 200 cars had to be built for homologation purposes. Renault produced 200 "Evolution Cars" (no. 8221 chassis) with certain changes over the standard production model and then produced a further 20 (as the regs. permitted). These 20 cars were called the Maxi's and of these 8 were dis-assembled for parts. Engine work was carried out by Philippe Coblenze at the workshops in Viry-Chatillon, the Formula 1 engine plant. Francois Bernard was responsible for chassis development. The team understood that tyre technology was crucial and therefore to be competitive the car needed to run on larger wheel diameters to make the use of Michelin's latest designs. To run larger wheels meant that the car would have to run in the next class up in FISAs' appendix. Rules required an increase in engine capacity,

which was between 2 and 2.5 litres. (This was a 1.5 litre size approx. equivalent with Turbo ratio applied)

The minimum actual capacity that Coblenze could opt for was 1430 cc (sounding familiar to 8221 owners!) but then they decided to go for the maximum, having to use the original cylinder block, of:
1527 CC. (X 1.5 = 2136 CC)

The suspension geometry was revamped front and rear to give greater suspension travel etc. The Maxi would compete in gravel rallies too. It was strengthened considerably as was 11lb the monocoque shell, still in steel construction though. The bonnet, wings, tailgate engine cover and other parts were all of Kevlar or carbon reinforced Kevlar. The aluminium roll cage was connected to stress points in the shell. The result of all this work was a 35 to 40% improvement in torsional rigidity over the Tour De Corse car.

The engine used many parts directly from the F1 V6 Turbo engine, including special pistons, the same turbocharger, special water-injection and the same Bosch mechanical fuel injection system as used in the 1982 F1 car.

A gentleman called Pierre Boudy invented an ingenious device called DPV (Dispositif Pre-Rotation Variable or variable Pre-Rotation device) which effectively cut out turbo lag, this

was first used at the Monaco Grand Prix in 1982 and later tested in the works cars. He was later poached by Peugeot to work on the 205T16.

By the time the Maxi made its debut it was producing 350 bhp, 311 lb foot torque and weighed 25kg less than its predecessor the Tour De Corse. To put the Maxi's pace into perspective you have to consider the 1985 Tour De Corse rally, Jean Ragnotti was one of 51 starters and managed the quickest time over 17 stages, 2nd quickest over 8 and stages and 3rd quickest over the remaining 25, leading him to a certain victory. The result was even more



impressive when you consider that he beat the opposition, Bruno Saby in his 205 T16 Evo whilst giving away 2 driving wheels, 80 bhp and 51 lb foot torque. He won with an average 18.73 seconds per stage.