

Practical Classics Restoration Show report

NEC, Birmingham, 18th/20th March 2022

Dale Bishop, Doncaster, South Yorkshire &

Richard Sozanski, Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwickshire

After a three-year gap from this show due to the pandemic, life is returning to a little normality.

Inexplicably, our stand location this year was in the back of beyond of Hall 3, hiding behind the toilet block. Any further and we would have been in the rear parking area.

Set-up day went smoothly and the stand was soon ready for action for the Friday morning.

Friday got off to a reasonably good start with plenty of people admiring the great selection of cars on the stand and by late morning the crowds had fizzled out and disappeared and it stayed like that for the rest of the show. Speaking with exhibitors in the craft show they confirmed that it was generally a quiet weekend by all accounts for everyone.

The great selection of cars on show did their best to pull in the crowds over the weekend, Emma Ibbotson's orange and white (Team Hartwell colours) Imp Sport being definitely the most popular for the younger members who visited the stand.

Also on the stand were Dave Andrews' well-known green Commer Imp Van and my recent 'garage find' Stiletto in rare Wardance orange.



Cars on display were
Dave Andrews' Commer Imp Van,
Emma Ibbotson's Sunbeam Sport
and Dale Bishop's Sunbeam Stiletto
All photos Dale Bishop

The organisers say that attendance for the show was just below that of the previous show but somehow that wasn't translated to where we were situated, with many visitors commenting, "What a job to find you". We hoisted the Imp flag as high as we were legally allowed so we could be seen but there was no escaping the poor location we were given.

A big thanks to Emma Ibbotson and Dave Andrews for bringing their cars to the show and Ian Toon in the autojumble in Hall 4 for directing everyone in our direction that couldn't find us.



Dale Bishop's 1971 Sunbeam Stiletto (named *Harold* after its original owner) is an amazing 'garage find', displayed at the NEC in as-found condition. Surely one of the most original Stiletto's around, it has never been welded, with spare key, service books and MoT certificates until it was laid up in 1987. Dale plans a sympathetic general overhaul later this year





Emma Ibbotson's Sunbeam Sport was green when bought but fancying something racier it is now stripped out and in Team Hartwell's colours. Very much a 'budget' restoration it was welded and painted in the back garden



Dave 'the Van' Andrews has owned his well known 1966 Commer Imp Van since 1990, being only second owner. Dave has increased the mileage from 20,000 to 80,000. Used regularly it has never failed to complete a journey

