

LETTERS

August 12 1990

Dear Club Members,

The enclosed cutting is from the Manchester Guardian of Saturday July 28 1990.

I came across it while on a business trip to the U.K.

As I run a 2CV6 and plan to keep doing so as long as possible, the reference to lead free petrol was of concern.

Perhaps some club members may know more than I do about the octane ratings (if any) and differences between UK standards and Australian standards (ULP)?

Do any members have any comments? Does the timing need to be altered? Debate on this would be interesting.

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CCOCA member

Sth. Australia

MOTORING

Providing fuel for thought

Lead-free petrol ruined the
2CV dream for **Kevin Barry**

MY WIFE had always wanted a Citroen 2CV so we part-exchanged our Metro for a brand new model. Informed opinion was that 2CVs seemed to run and run — they were cheap but they had character. I could find one in a car park without any trouble.

Amazingly enough there were no faults at the first service — or the second service. We enjoyed driving it. We turned the key and the engine roared into life. Other 2CV owners waved as they passed. I even decided to buy one for my own use. I had found my ideal car. I ordered the very last Charleston 2CV to enter England and sat back in pleasant anticipation.

Then the "green petrol" publicity started. Could the car use "lead-free?" Newspaper articles and a motoring journalist friend said not. Our garage doubted at first and then told me "yes". I confirmed the news with a telephone call to Citroen UK at Slough. Yes, I could use lead-free petrol and so could my wife with our first 2CV.

My wife's car ran along smoothly for 15,000 miles and then ground to a halt on the motorway. Overheating was diagnosed — one piston had seized and another was almost finished.

"Have you been using lead-free, sir?" "Yes but..." We studiously checked the engine number against the garage wall chart. The car could indeed run on lead-free — it was there in black and white. Rather than offer to pay £600 cash for a new engine, I decided to sulk, and see what happened. Our garage, the main Citroen dealer in Bradford, offered to negotiate with Citroen and it was finally agreed that M. Citroen would take away the seized engine for examination, providing a free, new engine with labour costs split between the garage and myself.

Despite many messages left with M. Citroen, no one from Slough bothered to speak to us. My wife's car is now running reasonably well. It uses lead-free, occasionally topped up with 4-star, as advised by the garage.

How are things with my car? Funny you should ask. In France, during the week of the last Bank Holiday, the car's mileometer reached 15,000 miles. The car then refused to start with its customary efficiency. Luckily we were near a Citroen garage run by Marcel, an Alain Prost lookalike. He said the problem was overheating. He tinkered for an hour, put in new plugs and points and then asked what petrol I had been using.

"There have been many problems with 2CVs overheating. It's the unleaded petrol."

Ah... lead-free petrol again. If M. Citroen has made a mistake, he's keeping very quiet about it. Meanwhile we still do not know what happened to the engine of my wife's car. They seem to have lost it. ☹

SATURDAY-SUNDAY JULY 28-29 1990