

Bits and pieces

- Although the Kamm tail Spiders had a new dashboard and teardrop door handles, the juniors soldiered on with the old arrangement and fixed quarter lights until 1980.
- In 1985 Alfa Romeo launched the Graduate, a cut price Series 3 Spider in the US, trading on the free publicity from the Dustin Hoffman film.
- The 1600 engine re-appeared in the Junior in 1972 and continued in various forms until 1992. It was the first of the 115 series. The 1300 was dropped in 1977.
- The Long-tail 1300s were the only Juniors made in right hand drive and were slow moving in the showroom.
- Subsequent models have made numerous TV and film appearances including, Wayne's World, Tequila Sunrise, Woman in Red and See no Evil Hear no Evil, the last two with Gene Wilder.
- In 1993 a LHD Series 4 Spider was selling for £16720, the 4.0 litre Jaguar XJS convertible £39264.
- Next time you watch the Graduate, check out the sound track, is that really an Alfa twin cam or a V8 under the bonnet?
- Painted dashboards came back in to fashion with the Fiat Coupe in 1994.
- The Duetto had a kerb weight of 2195lbs and an overall length of 167.3 inches. The Series 4, 2550lbs and 167.7 inches.
- Richard Jones's car, featured here, is No 85 out of 98 RHD cars made in 1966.
- Apparently there is an Italian chocolate bar called the 'Duetto' and after the manufacturers pointed this out, the 1600 never officially used this name!
- The Giulia 105/115 Spiders were the last 'purpose built' Spiders.



DCOE28, Dellorto DHLA 40s or Solex C40 DDH-4 carburetors and developed 89BHP at 6000 rpm, maximum torque, 101 lb ft @ 3200 rpm. The gear ratios were the same as before apart from a lower fifth gear of 0.86 against 0.79 of the Veloce. Final drive was the same as the Duetto. Top speed was 102mph and 0-60 in 13seconds.

Externally the Junior can be distinguished from its larger brother in having matt black lower front bumpers and plain 'chrome' hubcaps. In addition no headlamp cowls were fitted. Wheels and tyres were the same as the Duetto with 14" items available as an option. The front quarter lights were fixed and the interior sported a two-spoke steering wheel as per the GT Junior, and ashtray only. A total of 2,680 Juniors were made but only 180 RHD. The latter is not surprising as, in spite of its penny pinching specification, it was by no means cheap retailing on the UK market at £1749. A TR6 could be had for £1314!

US Models

Alfa Romeo were anxious that the new Spider would succeed in this very important market and arranged for it to be exhibited in the Spring of 1966 at the Finmeccanica organised exhibition of Italian products in New York. To add impact, Pininfarina and Alfa launched the new car on the transatlantic liner Raffaello on its way from Genoa to New York. Famous racers Sanesi and Count Johnny Lurani even demonstrated two of the cars on deck. A brilliant PR exercise.

More competitively priced, the 1600 for the US market was essentially the same as its European counterpart but missing the Perspex headlamp cowls. These were replaced by prominent chrome bezels and this feature was used on all subsequent US spec Giulia Spiders. This was the car driven by Dustin Hoffman in the 1967 film 'The Graduate' that endeared the car to American buyers. The film provided the sort of publicity that other manufacturers could only dream of.

The first of the Federal cars

Safety and emission regulations, dictated that the US specification 1750 Spider Veloce would be considerably different from other market models. This situation continued for the rest of the Spider's production life until the launch of the Series 4 in 1990. The model had a delayed launch in 1969. The primary difference was the fitting of Spica mechanical fuel injection producing 115bhp at 5500 rpm with torque of 137 lb ft @2800 rpm. Road

and Track quoted a top speed of 115mph and 0-60 time of 9.9 seconds, not as good as the European cars. They commented unfavourably, that the car lacked engine response, particularly when cold and that the carburetted 1600 models were "more pleasurable for really good drivers." SPICA injection continued to be fitted to US Spiders until 1982 when it was replaced by the Bosch L Jetronic electronic system. It has a poor reputation but can work well if properly maintained, often not the case. US spec 1750s introduced dual circuit braking with a servo each for the front and rear brakes. The rest of the Spider was almost identical to the European car apart from the retention of the 4.55 differential. Externally the cars differed slightly. US cars had linking chrome cross bars attached to the front and rear bumpers and an additional side repeater lights on the rear wing. Inside the cars had a dished plastic steering wheel and headrests as standard. This model continued to be sold until 1970 due to a delay in introducing the Kamm-tail 1750 to the US market. 2,220 cars were sold.

Which to buy

Long-tailed Spiders are now highly sought after and this is reflected in rising prices. Good Giulia 101 Spiders have been steadily increasing over the last few years and Duettos cannot be far behind. Price guides in Classic Car and Classic and Sportscar magazines are a good indicator of market conditions.

Which model is the most desirable? It is all a matter of personal choice. I would go for the 1750 Spider Veloce myself. The up rated mechanicals make it feel just a little more modern, enabling it to keep up with contemporary traffic conditions whilst retaining the chic styling. Before committing to the purchase remember that the newest of these fragile cars is now 37 years old and whilst mechanical and trim parts are readily available the bodysell is vulnerable and prone to rust. Very little is available off the shelf and this is usually hand made and expensive. Professional body restorations are not cheap! Finding cars with a factory specification is virtually impossible due to the inter changeability of parts. If the engine has been replaced by a larger one, it is very important to check that the other mechanical components have been upgraded to match. If you don't know what you are looking at, get an expert's help. As with any classic car the best advice when purchasing one of these iconic sports cars is buy the best you can afford, but buy carefully!

Jim Talbott

