

## DO THE LOCO-MOTION – PRO-MOTIVE LTD

Formed by Darren Grasby and Philip Jennings in 2006, the pair decided to make their mutual love of the Classic Mini into a business, albeit a part time one, as they are both Land Rover employees of longstanding, based at Gaydon (Darren 11 years; Philip 10 years).

The part time bit was absolutely fine until a few of their exquisite conversions started appearing and word of mouth spread, with orders soon following. They still have their day jobs but have worked out a way to pack 25 hours into a day..!

Their conversion is the polar opposite of the Knight Motorsport package, with the Pro-Motive Mini using an original shell, with the engine in the front, meaning that it ends up looking like a pretty convincing 'sleeper' if you leave it stock-looking, which most of their customers do, apparently.

The choice of engine is the Yamaha R1, any of the first three incarnations, known as the Genesis motor. Prices for these have actually come down of late and Phil picked-up a fuel injected 2002-motor for just £670, recently.

Pro-Motive pride themselves on supplying great products at value for money prices. For instance their kit costs just £2950 and for that you get their own (fabricated in-house) diff assembly, K&N remote air filter, hydraulic clutch release mechanism, chain, tensioner, gearlinkage assembly, new radiator, silicone hoses and a remote oil filter (you'll need to exchange your Mini's front subframe and in return get back a fully prepared one, ready to accept your engine).

There's no cutting and shutting to do and the only bit of rearranging is to move the

radiator from one side of the engine bay to the other. As simple as that. It's the sort of project that even the most ham-fisted DIY-er can look at and say: "I could do that."

Ultimately, the final spend is down to your specification and any goodies you choose during the build. The only essential extras you'll need, apart from donor vehicle and R1 engine, is an electric fan, a 2in bore exhaust and you'll need the wiring loom modifying (allow £100) although you can use the instruments from the bike, which won't cost you anything if you buy an insurance write-off.

Usual rules apply to buying a donor vehicle. Buy the best Mini you can afford, as you'll be glad you did, if you end up with one with no floors and rust taking hold. You'll be spoilt for choice as there's plenty to choose from and you'll more than likely be able to sell some of the stuff you don't need on eBay, which is always a nice result. That old A-series won't struggle to find a new home.

Lurking on the Pro-Motive options list are a few things to



**Darren Grasby (left) and Philip Jennings.**

tempt you, such as a stainless steel radiator vent panel at £20, a Quaife ATB limited slip differential at £575, sump guards at £50 and if you prefer another powdercoat colour rather than the standard silver, they'll charge you just £20 for the privilege.

As mentioned, the Pro-Motive boys do a superb job, and make a lot of their components in-house, including a fiendishly clever inline drive box with built-in reverse. It's a custom made, oil-



*Cool-looking Pro-Motive Mini is stock-looking until you look more closely.*



**Stock-looking exterior gives way to mean interior layout. Nice.**

immersed assembly (work of art!) and is fitted with a four-pin diff, accepting standard Mini driveshafts. It hooks up to a chain drive with a heavy duty Z-ring .530 chain with self-adjusting tensioner system and interchangeable ratios for track work, if required.

You can realistically expect a bottom line DIY total spend of circa £6000. It's beautifully executed and as I said before, superb value, especially when you consider the level of engineering on

show here. The yellow car in this feature is a corker.

I like the whole concept of 'Q' cars i.e standard looking road rockets that blow most others into the weeds! I've got an un-healthy, incurable addiction to sixties muscle cars when 'run what ya brung' events in the USA were full of such sleepers.

However, my little drive of the car reveals itself to be a missile. It feels just like a Classic Mini, but not quite as we know it, due of course to the bike engine giving it fierce acceleration.

If you're into the notion of tricking people with 'sleepers' then this is the car for you. Visually the Pro Motive looks totally stock, like a superb restoration job.

The car squirts along the straights and turns in purposefully on the corners. Regardless of whether you want to use it as a trackday



**Branded R1 engine looks the part.**

warrior, a roadcar or a mixture of both I don't feel you'll be disappointed.

Undoubtedly, the grasstracking acumen gained over the years has helped with their ability to offer a great package and one that works, too. There's something about the grasstracking discipline that produces clever engineers.

The whole Pro Motive concept may become even more appealing when you discover that it's not just limited to Classic Mini conversions. They can supply you with the hardware to adapt most hatchbacks from Metro to Citroën Saxo. More details on request.

Pro-Motive might have been keeping a low profile up until now, but I predict that will all change once more people discover what they can offer. Might need to squeeze more quarts into that pint pot, boys...

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