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Misprints, mismatches and missed connections in the world of Porsche

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Three enthusiasts are looking for answers.

You see Paul, Fernando and Robert each have a special Porsche with histories that a Certificate of Authenticity from Porsche can't seem to verify. In fact, these \$100 birth certificates from Stuttgart stirred up more silt from the bottom of an already cloudy pond causing much confusion, disappointment, and above all else, intrigue.

They contacted me to help make some sense of things — clearly they must know that these are the sorts of historical validations that keep me up all night neglecting such things as basic personal hygiene and eating. It's what I love doing.

Paul was the first.

One of my Porsche blood brothers, Jason Gonzalez, told me about a guy who may have what seems to be pre-production 924 Carrera GT. The dialogue went something like this:

"I just heard from a guy who may have one of the oldest of 924 Turbos, the VIN reads 00099."



"Oh yeah?" I said.

"Yep, he told me the car has all the makings of a factory mule, possibly a test car."

"We've gotta go pay this guy a visit then!" I blurted out.

Within a week I get an email that read like bait. It was Paul, and he got my attention before he even committed his words to pixels.

He explains to me how he found this 931 on Craigslist in sad shape, its Fuchs and calipers pilfered, the fuel injection system ended up who knows where. Oh, and it's a Euro with what seems to be factory Carrera GT fenders, flares and hood scoop. Bam! That last bit had me believing this was just another fake, probably butchered beyond belief, and of little provenance save for the early VIN.



Paul's Carrera GT.

But as we began exchanging emails that turned to phone calls, this little brick wasn't a fake at all. In fact, Paul shared some specific information about how the car was put together with methods of fabrication using period-correct fasteners and components from Porsche's parts bins, and mysterious Pearlescent White paint under the Diamond Silver Metallic coat on body panels, similar to the one used on the design study car chassis 93A0140203 shown at the 1979 Frankfurt IAA.

These sorts of details don't jibe with a fake. Most importantly, the fenders, flares, hood scoop and front spoiler weren't fiberglass, which is the economically preferred material for replica body kits, but polyurethane — the material Porsche used on the original Carrera GTs.

And the cherry on top? The one visual clue that separates the original from imposters are the side indicators on the fender. They're long and thin as opposed to short and square versions usually found on the replicas. In this

case, they have a 928 part number; the production versions had a 937 part number.

That last detail, along with everything else I casually left out so as to not bore you, intrigues me for lots of reasons and gives me a strong whiff of suspicion that the Zuffenhausen's hands were all over the creation of this thing that to the untrained eye might seem as a bogus Carrera GT. The images that Paul shared with me only bolster such theorizations.

Then I read the Certificate of Authenticity from Porsche. Before I was through reading the scant information on the thing, the paper goes limp in my hand — the irony. The proverbial brick wall presented itself before we even got it out of first gear.

Paul, like I, expected much juicier material, the likes of which any Porsche geek like yours truly would cherish as if a Ph.D. degree from Princeton. Instead, there are more questions than before and a thirst to uncover the secrets this car possesses — part of what makes this chase fun.

My theories on why the car exists are parallel with Paul's, and the fact that this was sold to a Porsche employee out of the gate underscores our thinking. Being sold in house explains why there's little in the kind of information Paul was looking for and legal ramifications like new German privacy laws make things a bit more difficult, but not impossible.

This drops me neatly into Fernando's story.

His involves a 1989 928 Club Sport, also with a Porsche employee as the first owner, and also with inconsistencies between the Certificate of Authenticity and the Fahrzeugdaten, Porsche's vehicle data, i.e. the build sheet.

Fernando, who lives in Spain, contacted me explaining his doubts about his 928 being just a CS. He thinks — and I tried to gently pull on his reins a bit to steer him toward a more logical explanation — that his car might have been another attempt at a 928 GTE, the legendary one-off 928 S4 with a supposed 360bhp lump, Club Sport DNA, select comfort features and Kremer body components that Porsche designated Grand Turismo Executive in an official document given to the owner.



Fernando's 928 CS.

He asked me to examine and help explain why the CofA, the vehicle ID sticker and build sheet don't match and help determine whether or not this 928 of his was possibly a second GTE made for the Porsche executive who first owned the car. Fernando's 928-cum-CS has the M28.41 engine consistent with the S4/CS series — all documents including the engine stamp confirm this along with the engine's serial number, and then things begin to get dicey.

The build sheet specs out a G28.12 five-speed gearbox used on model year 1987-89 S4s, and the Certificate of Authenticity and ID sticker on the chassis call out a G28.55, the five-speed used on the 928 CS and the later 928 GT.

The other important fact not included in the factory build sheet is option M637, the Club Sport option that includes sport shocks, revised ECU, loftier 6775 RPM redline, twin outlet sport exhaust, the G28.55 gearbox with limited slip differential, shorter gear lever and forged 8Jx16/9Jx16 wheels. The M637 option is, however, on the Certificate of Authenticity and the ID sticker on the car. Curious.

Where Fernando thinks he sees evidence of unofficial GTE pedigree are the fully electronically adjustable black leather seats, AirCon, cruise control, power windows, HiFi stereo system and a rear windshield wiper to name but a few.

Needless to say, the fact that it was sold to a Porsche employee and had changes made in between the build sheet and the CofA/ID sticker to the final product is of interest here.

Now Robert's story is a trifle different. The original owner wasn't a Porsche employee, but the specifications from Porsche are crossed.

His 1988 944 Turbo S is a Silver Rose edition, the full Monty, if I recall his exact words. The M758 option is labeled as Special Model 944 Turbo 1988 Turbo S, which means that aside from wearing Silber Rosa Metallic (Silver Rose) paint over a Burgundy Plaid interior, it had a larger turbo, brakes from the 928 S4, 7Jx16/9Jx16 forged wheels like those on the 928 Club Sport, firmer springs and shocks, larger front sway bar, limited slip differential, headlamp washers, full power seats and cloth door panels, a rear wiper and 30 more horsepower than the non S turbo — 247hp in US spec to be exact.

Porsche claims to have made 1,000 of them with "less than" 500 destined for the U.S. It was, according to the window sticker, a \$5,298 option — that's roughly \$10,606 in today's money. Exclusivity guaranteed.



Robert's 944 Silver Rose.

So what does Robert get in his Certificate of Authenticity that he claims misleading? For starters, the build sheet and ID sticker on the chassis claims his car to have the 217hp M44.51 engine, not the S's M44.52. I know it's becoming a bit tedious, but one more point has to be made about the engine; the block is stamped M44.52 and has the serial number that matches the CofA.

And then there's this bit with the Interior Material/Color Type on the CoA claiming "Grey Natural Leather," which his car doesn't have, while under the heading "Optional Equipment" spells out All Cloth Seats.



PORSCHE

Certificate of Authenticity

The Porsche vehicle with the identification number listed below was manufactured with the following assembly specifications:

WPOAA2957JN100000

Model Year/Type

1988 944 Turbo Coupe

Production Completion Date

12/09/1987

Manufacturer's Suggested Retail Price (MSRP)

Information Not Available

Engine Number/Type

47J00000 (M44/51)

Transmission Number/Type

AOR00000 (G01/6R)

Exterior Paint Color/Code

Silver Rose Metallic/F1

Interior Material Color/Type

Grey Natural Leather/03

Optional Equipment

US Standard Emissions
Sport Suspension Package
Blaupunkt Radio 'Reno'
Limited Slip Differential
Headlight Washers
Protective Side Moldings
Rear Wiper
Full Power Seats - L/R
Cruise Control

HiFi Sound System
Cloth Door Panels
'Bosch' Anti-Lock Brake System
Electric Sliding Sunroof
Divided Rear Seat
Special Model 944 Turbo
All Cloth Seats
Goodyear Tires

Detlev von Platen
President and Chief Executive Officer

Certificate of Authenticity for Robert's 944 Silver Rose.

Robert also sent me the original window sticker that confirms that this 951 is indeed a Silver Rose edition. The

only thing to do at that point was to get the build sheet through my contact at Porsche — I wanted to help clear things up for this poor fellow once and for all.

Well, I didn't.

I received the Fahrzeugdaten from Porsche in an email, opened it, printed it, lit my pipe, took a long drag, put on my glasses and read it. "Come on," I said to myself. "How the hell could this be?" The build sheet did in fact match the CofA save for one small detail — the exterior paint color, Zenith Blue Metallic.

It's comical, really.

This color, Zenith Blue, was offered from model year 1997 through until 2000 on 911s and Boxsters. I couldn't wait to tell Robert what I found out, he'd throw his hands in the air — I was sure of it.

Look, mistakes happen, but I think there's more to it than just simple misprints. Something got switched along the line in the production of Robert's car, much like Fernando's. Finding out exactly what happened and why may be more than records can prove or disprove, which is why the CofA was ordered in the first place. I'm still on this one, determined to figure it out.

Fernando's case might be a bit easier. Finding the original owner, the Porsche executive, will certainly clear a good chunk of the doubts stirred up by the 928's Certificate of Authenticity and build sheet. The GTE he thinks it may be is a bit of a stretch in my opinion. Quite possibly the executive just wanted his CS tarted up a bit to make things a little more comfortable. But anything is possible in this case, and records will only go so far.

Paul's situation? Well, this one is unique and has me more than intrigued. Of late, he's made some progress by contacting Porsche Classic— although it wasn't easy. The next step is to find the Porsche employee who owned the 924 originally, and with a car that's 36 years old, we'd better hurry it up a bit unless nature already took its course.

Nothing is ever cut and dry with vintage Porsches, but that's the thrill of it. I'll bet there are many more cases similar to these, and with enough of them, writing articles such as this one falls short of discussing their fascinating stories — the likes of which are best reserved for a book.

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About the Author

A dyed-in-the wool, air-cooled 911 junkie, Pablo Deferrari doesn't discriminate against other Porsches. Want further proof? He's in love with Porsche's early water-cooled models and is dedicated to the celebration of the 924, 928, 944 and 968 series. Pablo is one car away from having all four of these models in his own collection: the 924.

Pablo Deferrari

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An advertisement for the ESCORT Passport Max radar detector. On the left, the text reads "NEW PASSPORT MAX High Definition Radar Performance" with the ESCORT logo below. In the center is a close-up of the radar detector's display showing "55 49 Highway". To the right, a hand holds a smartphone displaying the ESCORT app interface. Further right, the text says "compatible with ESCORT (over)" and "Take Ticket Protection to the Max". On the far right, a red button says "GET IT NOW" and below it, "Includes FREE Ground Shipping". The background is a blurred image of a road.

An advertisement for Pirelli P Zero tires. At the top is the Pirelli logo. Below it are three circular images: two showing the tread pattern of the tires and one showing a wheel. The text "ENGINEERED TO EXCITE" is prominently displayed in white, with "P ZERO" below it. At the bottom, there is a blue button that says "Learn More".

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