

GIULIETTA SPIDER FUSE BOX COVER

By Conrad Miesiak - AROC Detroit

Anyone reasonably adept with shaping and assembling bits of plywood can make a wooden replica of the plastic Giulietta fuse box cover, as I did for my 1957 spider.

The first step was to locate an original 6-fuse cover, in this case one loaned by Claus Menzel. Under-the-dash fuse boxes from this period have variations, so borrow a cover that matches your Giulietta's set-up. Because the cover must be non-metallic, next came acquiring 5-ply birch plywood of the correct thickness from a local model airplane shop. The thin layers of plywood made for models make for light weight, strength and stability. After taking careful measurements of the original cover, I cut the sides, top and underside braces, then assembled the side perimeter using Titebond premium wood glue.

After the glue dried, I sanded one side of the frame, then notched and glued the braces in place as well as the corner fillets. The same side was sanded again, then the cover glued in place. Carefully sanding all the exterior surfaces, shaping the radii and corners plus the four wire notches, the basics were complete.

The cover was finished with sanding sealer followed by black model spray.

The plate was machine engraved by a local trophy shop I had used before. Their smallest characters were too large to replicate the original lettering, so in this case a few abbreviations had to be used. The cost was approximately 25 cents per character. A local custom jeweler could perfectly replicate the plate with a miniature NCR pattern cutter, but the cost would be prohibitive unless you plan to make and sell 100 plates, because making only one would cost more than an original cover. The plate was masked using vinyl striping tape, then painted.

A local hardware store (ACE, in this case) had the correct screw and knurled nut. I silver sol-

dered the screw and nut together, and trimmed as needed. A hole was drilled through the cover and a plastic sleeve added for screw retention. The plate rivets are actually gudgeon pins.

The wooden replica should be at least as durable as the fragile bakelite originals, and much less expensive than purchasing one of the rare surviving covers. Making a plywood substitute is not rocket science, but merely requires a bit of patience and hobbyist-level skills.

