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ISETTA

GAZETTE



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MAGAZINE OF THE ISETTA OWNERS CLUB OF GREAT BRITAIN

The Isetta Owners Club of Great Britain Ltd.

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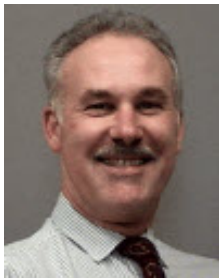
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Editors Bit



Well, a new Isetta year has begun but for some of you this could be your last Gazette. Why, because you have not paid your subs. If you wait by your letterbox for the best quarterly magazine I can produce then you best go and check your bank statements to see if we have been able to extract a few pennies from you. We have made payments easier this year by using PayPal at no extra cost so if you are computer literate you may want to try it out.

As you know, I featured the restoration of my Berkeley T60 in the gazette to help fill the pages when necessary.

You may also remember the restoration was featured in 'Practical Classics' magazine last March as the 'Readers Resto' for the month.

Well, thanks to those who voted for me I have been awarded the 'Restoration of the Year' award by the magazine.

As you can imagine, I am delighted with the award for my first restoration project. This will now spur me on for the restoration of my other 2 Isettas and a Zundapp Janus. It just goes to show what can be achieved with average equipment and the help of other club members. PS. The second hand spares will be closed during June & July for our secondhand spares manager to take a long holiday (not on the proceeds of the spares I hope!) so get in quick if you need any.

If any of you out there would like to become more involved in the running of the club, there are spaces on the committee waiting to be filled. We could do with some new faces the old ones are looking rough.....

Ian Parris

Chairmans Chat

Well the clocks have gone forward, the light nights are here, Easter is upon us so the rallying season will soon be off to a flying start. The club needs a volunteer to co-ordinate our stand at the NEC and provide a presence at the National Microcar Rally in Great Yarmouth as Lee Turnham is unavailable this year due to Olympic commitments. Lee has given stalwart service to these events in previous years and has offered to do all the clerical functions associated with the application. What we need is help in getting the physical aspects of the show together i.e. getting the cars and owners organised and setting up the stand etc. These are the most high profile events of the year as far as the club is concerned enabling us to showpiece our cars and demonstrate the existence of the club. Any enquiries to me as soon as possible please.

It wouldn't be chairman's chat without an update from me on the progress of my car, what more can I say other than there has been none due to other commitments taking priority. I'm sure there will be plenty of members showing off their cars, which may well put mine to shame, but one day I will join you.

Ending on a sad note, I sent a sympathy card to the family of the late Sir Jimmy Saville on behalf of the club and received a wonderful card in reply from his niece.

Jeff Todd

ALMOST TV STARDOM by Neal Bircher

My bubblecar's rise to TV stardom began exactly ten years ago, in January 2002. After it had lain neglected in my parents' garden in Gloucester for more than two decades, I dragged it out and brought it up to my house in London in order that I could restore it. I posted a photo of it leaving my parents' house on the Isetta Owners' Club web site.

The following year, when the restoration was progressing (very slowly), I was contacted by the makers of the Channel 4 series, *Salvage Squad*, who had seen the photo. They wanted to restore an Isetta and to make a TV programme out of doing so, and they asked if they could use my car.

The bubblecar was very excited. We did screen tests, suppliers and restorers were arranged, and we were even going to meet Suggs, who presented the show at the time. But then *Salvage Squad* changed their minds. It was a bad time for the bubblecar which had had its promise of stardom



whipped from under its three wheels. But things were to get much worse for it than that ... catastrophically so. (But more of that in a different story for later in the year: The 31 year restoration – a story of love, neglect, triumph, disaster, theft, hope, despair, and, ultimately, glory!) To make matters worse, I got some national TV exposure myself when my idea, *carhagglers.com*, received media coverage of all sorts. The bubblecar was very jealous.



But let's fast-forward to June 2011. Things were looking up again. The bubblecar's restoration really was almost complete, and it was booked in for its MoT, when a friend (whom I know through our mutual interests in classic cars and the Glastonbury festival) texted me. She was working for a production company making a TV film for the BBC, called *Holy Flying Circus* (about the controversy provoked in 1979 by the Monty Python film *The Life of Brian*), and had been asked to source a bubblecar to feature in it. My bubblecar was again very excited. Fortunately it passed its MoT, first time, and so was

available for filming, which was to take place in the City of London one Sunday in August. (By the way, this was not strictly the same car as at the start of the story, more a combination of that one and another restoration project that I had bought through eBay ... but, again, more of that later in the year.)

This time the filming did take place. The bubblecar loved meeting the actors, directors, producers, make-up artists, and so on, as well as the adoring public, but not half as much as all of those people loved meeting the bubblecar.

Then somebody else from the BBC contacted me. They had heard of this cute little blue car, and wanted to film it for a new kids' series for CBeebies, called *Numbats*.

The bubblecar was more excited than ever! But not half as excited as my kids were. What's more, the bubblecar's best friend, my other classic – a yellow Morgan 4/4, was also to be included. Result!

The filming took place in my driveway. No, my driveway isn't a mile long; there just wasn't a requirement for a great deal of movement from the cars for their various scenes.

Both shows were due to screen in the autumn. Autumn came, and *Holy Flying Circus* got a lot of publicity. I watched all 90 minutes with an intensity that I'd never watched any TV programme before. But the bubblecar's scene didn't make the final cut. *Numbats* meanwhile ... didn't even appear. You see, this really is a tale of the highs, lows, and lows of the journey to TV stardom. The bubblecar was once again mortified.



Come mid-January (a few days before when I am writing this story) I dared to contact CBeebies to ask what had become of *Numbats*. I got an answer that was pretty much what I expected: *Numbats* was never going to grace our TV screens. **But**, it's never going to be screened because it's changed its name to *Numtums* (No, not "Numbums", which my six-year-old keeps insisting on calling it), and its 25 episodes will start hitting the screens (as they say in TVland) some time in February. More than that, they will, and I quote, "feature the bubblecar quite heavily".

So, by the time you read this, unless something's gone horribly wrong again (as a betting man, I'll give you evens on that one) then, if you are aged between 2 and 4, you have probably seen *Numtums*. And if you are not aged between 2 and 4, but you are into bubblecars (which clearly you are or you wouldn't be reading this) then there's a reasonable chance that somebody will have told you that there's a new kids' programme that has a car on it like yours – you know, one of those fibreglass Italian things that doesn't have a reverse gear.



On the set of *Holy Flying Circus*, with actors Tom Fisher (seated) and Rufus Jones.

If *Numtums* hasn't shown then the bubblecar will no doubt be sulking and have become impossible to please. If it has shown then the bubblecar will no doubt be basking in its own glory, and have become even more difficult to please. Being equally narcissistic I have begun performing on the London comedy circuit, and have also secured myself a regular slot on a radio comedy show. No money in either case, but it certainly beats the day job. I feel I'm in a media exposure competition with my own bubblecar. And, once again, I'll let you know how we both get on as the year goes on.

So, watch this space for more from the world of bubblecar showbiz, as well as highlights of the rollercoaster story of that 31 year restoration. Yes, that's right: 31 years! If you are stuck in the middle of a long one yourself, then I promise you that it really is worth it in the end. As I say, watch this space!

BUBBLE DOWN UNDER by Julian Foster

I decided to attend the 2012 Vintage Car Club Rally in Wanganui NZ. I drove up to the rally in my trusty 1977 Honda Civic. Wanganui is about a two and a half hour drive north of Wellington - the rally was amazing, though sadly of the huge number of cars present, there didn't appear to be a single micro car. A friend of mine who lives in Wanganui told me of an Isetta that's on show at the Sarjeant Gallery there, so I did a quick look-in after the VCC car rally and took some pictures.

I noticed a sticker in the nearside rear window that looks suspiciously like an IOC of GB sticker.



I'm still intending for my bubble's resto to happen August next year, when funds will have accrued! My biggest concern travelling to an event like this would be the cruising speed of the Isetta vs. the cruising speed of all of the rest of the traffic - 100km/hr is the open road speed limit, and outside of the major centres, most of the national highways here are 2 lane only.

CARS RECENTLY SEEN ON EBAY





I have just extricated this photo out of a box of many. Can anyone shed any light on



This is a commissioned painting of 4 of Alan Town's Micro-cars, outside the Star café, (once Max Bar), at Southwater, Sussex, where the artist, Stan Hider lived 1946 – 1964. Note the young lady on the far right, who appears to be thinking” “He said he had a car!!!”.

IT ALL BEGAN.....

It all began in the spring of 2010 at the Thriplow Daffodil weekend, an annual fete/fund raising event for many different charities where the village has open gardens, stalls, side shows and many different events also a field for classic cars and steam engines.



I parked my Berkeley T60 next to an Isetta. The iconic bubble car attracted more interest, and a few weeks later when under the influence of a little red wine I bid on an Isetta on Ebay which required restoration. and won it by 60p!! The Isetta had been off the road since 1966 and had all the usual rusted areas. I welded in new sills, front floor, both lower front mudguards and the inner and outer lower door sections. The new window seals were purchased. Mike Ayriss put me onto a German company who supplied the new clutch and various other small components. The engine came partly rebuilt with new bearings but I had to piece the rest back together.

I was weaned on Berkeleys so it was a long time before I realised the spindle connecting the gearbox to the drive unit was missing, eventually one cropped up on Ebay but it came with the drive unit and rear wheel assembly, fortunately I was able to strip these down and re-sell.

Wherever possible I cleaned up and re-used old parts rather than buying new, even the original number plates stamped "Wrights of Edgware" were repainted, but the once badly corroded carburettor constantly floods and a new one has been ordered from the club. New bushes were fitted to steering joints and new brake seals all round. I sprayed the body with grey cellulose primer filler but it started splitting. Even after rubbing these splits out new ones would appear!! Unknowingly the longer I left the primer, (I thought to harden off



before applying the top coat) the worse it would get. I downloaded the technical sheet to discover the primer should only be left for a maximum of 6 hours before applying the top coat.



Re-spray take two, all went well with a new bright red finish instead of the cherry red. Although the engine would start fine it would cough and splutter to a death when the accelerator pedal was pushed. A new condenser cured the problem and she now runs fine. She flew through the MOT and is great fun to drive. Can't wait for Thriplow in March 2012.

Geoffrey Dabrowa.

I am currently a first year student at the University of Wales, Newport, where I am studying Photography for Fashion and Advertising. In early February, I was set a black and white portraiture task, and was asked to produce imagery that could be used within the modern advertising industry.



Personally, I relate black and white photography to the traditional methods that were used before digital was so freely available and of course, the classical yet artistic imagery that we know today from the likes of David Bailey and Richard Avedon to name but a few. With the 1960s in mind, I next considered what product I could advertise.

My grandfather's 1958 four – wheeler Isetta has been in the family for over forty years. When he died in 2000, my parents took it upon themselves to restore it and make it roadworthy once more which had been fully completed nearly five years ago. I soon made the decision of making Isetta my new 'client' and made arrangements to visit my hometown, Portsmouth, where I completed the photo shoot along one of the local beaches, Hayling Island.

Overall, I wanted a rather romantic theme that would reflect the work of the era in which I had studied. It was also important that I show the car in every frame and its unique selling points such as the way the door opens from the front and its unusual shape. The photographs are very light – hearted and have hopefully reflected the fashions that we recognise from the late 50s and early 60s as well as showing the fun and interesting cars at their very best!



By Rachael Yearley

"PULL OVER" say JERSEY POLICE !

Over Christmas, up here @ Southport, in the dark North-West of the UK, Sandy & I were invited to a Festive Soiree including the celebration of a significant birthday milestone, to her long standing friend Ann.

During the evening, gatherings occurred in Ann's kitchen including conversations about past Cars,.....inevitably.

Ann's sister, with husband Robert, had travelled from that gorgeous English Channel Isle of Jersey, and it turned out during our chats whilst being surrounded by splendid food & beverages of different concoctions, that his Family Automobile Business did include the importation & dealership for BMW's finest, for subsequent hire by the Holiday making tourists to drive around the lanes.

Spot also the snake line of the six micro cars photographed, without licence plates, freshly deposited from the ship in harbour, all having to queue in the main street of the Island's capital, St. Helier. They were stationary, because the local constabulary had noted the absence of sufficient "Trade Plates" being displayed on all the Isettas.



The initial plan to transfer the 300cc micros I gather, was, to share just one set of Trade Plates, such that they would be strapped only to the front and rear vehicles. In the convoy!

Still, matters evolved with those "In

charge", and all were "legally escorted" to Grouville Garages.



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I trust you enjoy these memorable photograph from the 60's, and do share with me our gratitude to Robert Linton, for taking the time to trace these Family mentoos of Bubbling in Jersey? Alan Town.

Coupling Flanges Must Not Wobble john jensen

If you have a wobbly coupling flange on your transmission or chain drive, it might be difficult to see a wobble when the drive shaft and giubos are in place and under tension. You would have to remove the driveshaft check both flanges to be certain. So, it is very important to install those coupling flanges firmly so that they will not loosen in actual hard use.

Any amount of slippage in rotation or even sliding on the splines will wear the splines on the coupling flange. The splined shafts tend to hold up better, but replacing either item is expensive and unnecessary if you fix the coupling flange securely at the outset. The outset means good splines on both the splined shaft and splined flange. That's the starting point! If you're dealing with worn parts, these suggestions might be too late. The original parts for securing the coupling flange to the splined shaft were a bolt and a tab-washer. This was adequate if the tab-washer was secured so that it and the bolt could not move at all. There is a lot of freedom for error here, and good workmanship is essential. Eventually, lock-tight products came along to help keep such bolts tight and not turning. But, if the bolt itself is unable to prevent the flange from slight rotation, then a modest rotation repeatedly can cause increasing wear. The centerbolt must hold the coupling flange securely against the inner race of the roller bearing it butts up against.

To do this, the centerbolt pulls the splined shaft and coupling flange together. The tab-washer helps to lock them in an embrace. The head of the centerbolt needs to press against the coupling flange. My "maybe original bolt" is an M10x19. An M10x22mm would be far better. As far as I know, there isn't a bolt like that. Even the BMW item is hard to find now.

Here is one of my supposedly original BMW

Isetta tab washers and M10x19 thin-head bolt. How the washer got smooshed downward below the coupling flange itself, I don't know, but the circular imprint is 19mm diam. and matches the bolt size. I doubt the tab washer managed to save the coupling flange from wearing at the splines. The thread length of this bolt is only 14mm, enough perhaps for this 1mm thick washer.



Here is my old M10x19 bolt centred on the coupling flange. See the dark spline-recess to the left of that bolt? A 22mm diam. bolt head would be or should be used to press against the flat machined face of the coupling flange. A machinist could make you one or two, for a price. I suspect it would be wise to use a strong washer of 22 to 24mm in diameter, 2mm thick and a centre hole that is snug to the bolt so nothing can slide around. I found an M10x17 bolt with a thread length of 20mm, but it needs to be slightly shorter or it will bottom out inside the splined shaft. The 17mm bolt head is not large

enough, however. It should be at least 19mm. The bolt length needs to be a couple mm shorter than the washers you have added in between, plus the 1.5mm free-space you need between the face of the splined shaft and the face of the coupling flange. This is critical! You must figure this out yourself!



Even if you buy a bolt from an Isetta parts supplier, you must verify that what you are doing will work properly. Machinists and mechanical engineers figure this stuff out all the time, but I am neither one. Use your vernier calliper and give it your best shot.

I wanted a larger washer to hold the coupling flange down so it couldn't lift up as it rotates with all the tension that is involved. I found some very strong 2mm thick oversize flat fender-washers at the Ace hardware store near me. I got a couple that were 22mm in diameter with a centre hole of maybe 1/4". Hopefully this washer will remain strong and flat.

I drilled the centre-hole a bit larger until I could thread it with an M10x1.5 metric tap. My centre bolt will have to be threaded into the fender-washer so that when both are in position, the washer will remain fairly tight to the bolt, unable to move sideways even if the bolt is only finger-tight.

Let's call this a **phase 1** solution with no tab-washer, but use a lock-tight product of some sort to secure the bolt. The threaded hole in the splined shaft probably has oil in there on the threads. This is an oily environment. You would need to chase the threads in the shaft with a 10x1.5mm metric tap, then blow the dust out with compressed air. Next you'd have to clean the inside with a spray solvent that will dissolve and remove oil.

Clean the bolt threads as well and check that you have more room for the bolt in that hole than the bolt is long, so you don't bottom out. You need to measure the depth from the surface of the fender-washer to the bottom of the threads in the hole. There are several ways to do this, so do it your way and hope that you're on-the-money. "Do good work" is the guideline.

A **phase 2** solution might be the addition of a tab-washer between the bolt and the fender-washer, with a tab long enough and wide enough to get a grip in the big gap between the legs of the coupling flange. You also need to verify your bolt length for this, and I would still go with a lock-tight product of some sort. You can always heat the bolt head later to remove the bolt.



Here is a **phase 3** approach, perhaps better, perhaps not. It involves making a more elaborate tab washer that has a long tab with a hole for one of the coupling bolts. It should be made of 1mm steel sheet or stainless. You would still use the 22mm fender washer with this 2-hole tab washer on top of the fender washer and then a 19mm centre bolt, nothing less than 19mm.

Here is the assembled **phase 3** approach. The long-arm tab-washer is in place connecting the center bolt and coupling bolt. Two sides of the

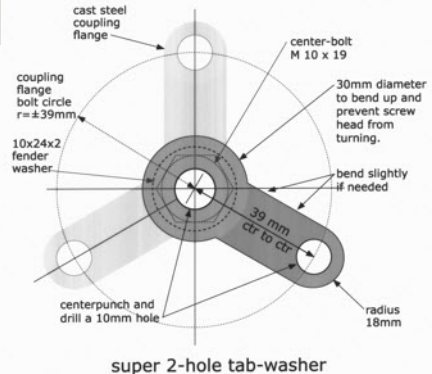
tab-washer are bent up to secure the bolt from twisting. Crimp the sides tighter than this. Under the tab-washer is the 22mm OD fender-washer that should be able to hold the coupling flange flat against the inner race of the outer ball bearing on the splined



bananas trying to deal with this double-giubo driveshaft and a transmission re-design, perhaps without enough time to do much testing. The working concept for this driveshaft with double giubbos is more complex than it appears. I cannot guarantee this solution will work. It depends on one's understanding of the components and forces involved, plus good workmanship.

shaft of the transmission; same for the chain-drive input shaft. I would still use some sort of lock-tight means of securing the bolt.

With thanks to Boggissimo and Isetta World for the opportunity to see how some former Isetta owner actually created this solution at some time in the past. I suspect that the BMW staff was going



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

This year after a absence of too many years I thought I would attend the National for the Sunday at least. Now living in Mid-West Wales to get any where is a bit of an expedition. With the Isetta loaded on my newly constructed half finished trailer coupled to my equally classic 1954 Standard Vanguard I set out just after five o'clock on Sunday morning for the 150 Mile drive to Calne in deepest Wiltshire.

I arrived at the Attwell Wilson Museum just after Ten o'clock with only a stop for Petrol in Crickhowell, then something eat on the A449 just before the M4 Junction 24 and an enforced stop when I came off the M4 at Junction 18 with a boil up caused by a slack fan belt.

It was nice to see a good turn out of cars of all Micro-Makes and some of the new pretenders. And to see a lot old friends with and without cars.

After an enjoyable day I was back on my way home by half four with a petrol stop in Abergavenny.

The last part of the journey through the hills from Abergavenny to Lampeter was in rain showers some heavy at times. Driving in the dark and in the rain with fifty year old Dynamo powered Headlights on at times narrow and twisty roads is not the best way to travel. I arrived home just after ten totally 'Na**e**d'

And remember the Standard Vanguard has NO power steering or servo assisted brakes making stopping interesting to say the least with half-a-ton of un-braked trailer pushing you from behind.

Graham Potter (0613) BMW Isetta 300 - TAY 794.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

April 6th– 9th - Reliant Owners' Club annual rally - at Ripon Racecourse - always a good rally - all maniacs welcomed, for details contact Ruth on 0191594 3094

April 19th–22nd - Early season rally - North Yorkshire - venue to be confirmed but will be a new venue for us with plenty to see and do. More details as they become available.

May 4th–7th (Friday - Monday) - **Reliant Owners' Club** rally at the Rose & Crown, Holbeach Hum, Lincs. All micromaniacs welcome; contact Pete on 01159 217536 for details

May 18th-20th German Scooter Rally at the Bubble Car Museum Langrick, Nr ' Boston PE27AW Contact: Martin 01507 358132

May 26th–27th - Bubblecar museum annual rally celebrating the re-opening of the museum. At Clover farm, main road, Langrick, Boston, Lines PE22 7AW telephone Paula on 01205 280037.

June 1st – 4th - Reliant owners club rally at Stoke prior sports & country club, Weston Hall road, Bronsgrove B60 4LT all micromaniacs welcome. Contact Geoff on 07811 791699

June 1st – 10th - The Northern Microcar Rally - our main rally of the season - Dates are firm so you can book your holidays but venue yet to be decided - more details as they become available - check facebook /website in between magazines.

June 22nd-24th Heinkel Trojan Club Rally and AGM Held at the Bubblecar Museum, Langrick,Nr Boston PE22 4ALT Contact Mark Fisher.

June 25th-28th 29th International Annual Rally, Salzbergen, Germany, located on the German border approx 130miles from Rotterdam ferry terminal (so as close to UK. as can be to Germany) huge Heinkel rally for scooters and cars. Contact Mark Fisher for more details.

June 28th–July 1st - Ray's NOTBAR rally - to be held at High Lanning Camp Site in the lovely village of Dent in the very West of Yorkshire.

June 2012 Heinkel Tourist Shop Germany - ride from Germany to Ireland via England,- week long ride/drive with meeting points in the UK and Ireland, - contact Mark Fisher for more details.

June 28th-1st July Rays Rally at High Laning Caravan and Camping Park, Dent, Cumbria. LAIO 5QJ Note: if using Sat Nav to travel to Dent, it is advised **not** to take the shortest route over Kingsdale when travelling with Caravans and Motorhomes. Contact: Ray Glendinning 01539 625239

July 20th-22nd Jims Heinkel Trojan Club Yorkshire Rally Details and venue TBA

The Bristol Microcar Club are presenting their 27th Microcar Rally on 6th to 8th July 2012. Bring your Microcar. Friday afternoon is arrival and camping set up. Saturday has a Road Run to a local place of Interest. A Barbecue in the evening. The main RALLY is on Sunday with displays of Cars, Awards, Auto Jumble. KEYNSHAM RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB, CROWN FIELDS, BRISTOL ROAD, KEYNSHAM, BS31 2BE

July 13th – 15th - Jim Hacking's Rally - venue to be confirmed. Date firm so that those needing to book holidays can do so.

Mid August - Tan Hill rally - dates to be finalised but will be a 4 day rally based on top of the world. Cheap camping, on site food and drink - challenging drives across some of the wildest countryside in Britain.

September 6th – 9th National microcar rally - this year at Rose farm touring park, Stepshort, Great Yarmouth - hosted by the East Anglian Microcar club. Contact Tony Pettingill on 07780 576663 or Martin Galea on 07777636829

November 16th-18th Classic Car Show, NEC, Birmingham.

BUY AND SELL

Rare RHD 4 wheel Isetta bought 20 years ago as a restoration project but dry stored since then, believed to be complete, has glass, door and good seat will need full restoration no MOT/Tax. Offers over £5000 please (should be on Ebay soon) Contact me via email - perrett.alan@gmail.com

Isetta 300 LHD, underwent comprehensive restoration around 20yrs ago has been dry stored since. Some minor rust in floor sections, brakes will need renewing/refurb and petrol tank will need cleaning out, no MOT/Tax. Offers over £3500 please (should be on Ebay soon) Contact me via email - perrett.alan@gmail.com



The Club is pleased to welcome:-

Kevin J Hachkowski	Ontario
Wayne Norman	Ely
Frank Christlow	Bridlington
Greg Pearson	Bristol
David High	Leeds
Matthew Bartlett	Swindon
Ronald Spence	Orkney
Achilleus Choursoglou	Greece
Chris Oliver	London

New Members since the last Gazette.

To advertise your items for sale or want adds etc. please email the editor at isetta@ianparris.com

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