

BOOK  
OF THE  
MONTH

FACEL VEGA  
GRAND LUXE SPORTIF

# FACEL VEGA GRAND LUXE SPORTIF

Martin Buckley; Palawan Press; £250 clothbound, £750 leatherbound

**PALAWAN** specialises in very expensively produced collector's books, and this definitive work on Facel Vega – limited to only 1000 copies – has been keenly awaited. We were less than complimentary about 2005's magnum opus on Aston Martin, so it's a real pleasure to report that the Facel book is quite outstanding.

That's as it should be, for it's been put together by a 'dream team' of classic car journalist Martin Buckley and designer (and historic racer) Julian Balme, both of whom have a real feel for this kind of subject. Buckley has turned out his share of coffee-table potboilers over the years but he's more than redeemed himself with what has clearly been a labour of love. His flair for relating cars to contemporary culture, allied with Balme's own affinity with 1950s and '60s design cues, has resulted in a work that's deeply informative but also a joy to read and to handle. Just what you should expect from a Palawan book.

Strictly speaking, the Facel Vega name didn't come into being until the early-'50s but Buckley covers every part of founder Jean Daninos's career, including his car bodies for Simca and the coachbuilt Facel-Bentleys. He's at his happiest, though, when relating stories about cars owned by celebrities – the foreword is written by Peter Fonda – and the glamour world that Facel owners tended to inhabit; there's also a fascinating chapter on the sad decline of these luxury cars in their later years.

Yes, the book costs a lot of money – but we're inclined to think it's worth it.

