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AND FINALLY...

Bremgarten explores both ends of the Swiss Transport Spectrum at Goodwood



*The Rinspeed train car or should it be car train? PHOTO: Rinspeed
A 1905 Swiss Army bicycle. PHOTO: Bremgarten*

But careful observers at this year's event might have spotted two forms of Swiss transport that could not be further apart.

Silently resting in one of the paddock spaces amongst the historic collection of Alfa Romeos was this very old bike. It is from the Swiss Army Bicycle Corps, who must have been a fit lot considering the design of the bike (it has a single gear and weighs-in at a hefty 23kg) and the steepness of many Swiss mountain passes. The model, dating from 1905, was still standard issue until 1993. The Bicycle Corps was sadly disbanded in 2001 and the machines are now collectors items.

As a complete contrast, in the FoS-Tech pavilion amongst all the "green" vehicles of the future, was this Swiss designed and built (yes – Switzerland does have a car industry) electric car. Rinspeed is a company

founded by Swiss car visionary Frank M. Rinderknecht and they normally make high performance one-offs or limited runs, so this is a new venture. The design at less than 2.6m in length is very compact, which means it can be loaded crossways in a (yet to be built) special railway vehicle and be charged up from the railway electrical system whilst being carried on its journey. The hi-tech interior does not have a steering wheel, just a joystick amongst the other gadgets. With its modern mobile communication technology, drivers will be able to book their train journeys from the car and will thus be able to simply drive onto their chosen train. At the end of the train journey, the car will be charged ready for more commuting, thus overcoming the major problem of electric vehicles – their range. By using the train for the longer central part of their trip and the car for the start and end travel, the driver gets the best of both worlds, plus whilst on the train, all the normal train facilities are available. See www.rinspeed.com/pages/cars/uc/pre-uc.htm for more