

A Mini miracle! Blown 20ft over the sea wall, battered by waves, and it still started first time

By JAMES GRYLLS

A FISHING village was drinking last night to its catch of the day — the Mini that refused to die.

Mark McDermott woke up to find that his 13-year-old runabout had gone flyabout into the North Sea and was in imminent danger of doing a pretty good imitation of a yellow submarine.

A huge gust of wind had hurled BON 913V more than 20ft down the rocky sea wall at Gadenstown, Banffshire, onto the stony beach below.

By the time Mr McDermott arrived, freezing cold water was lapping up to the windows. But a local contractor with a JCB threw him a lifeline and neighbours helped him fasten a rope from the digger's bucket.

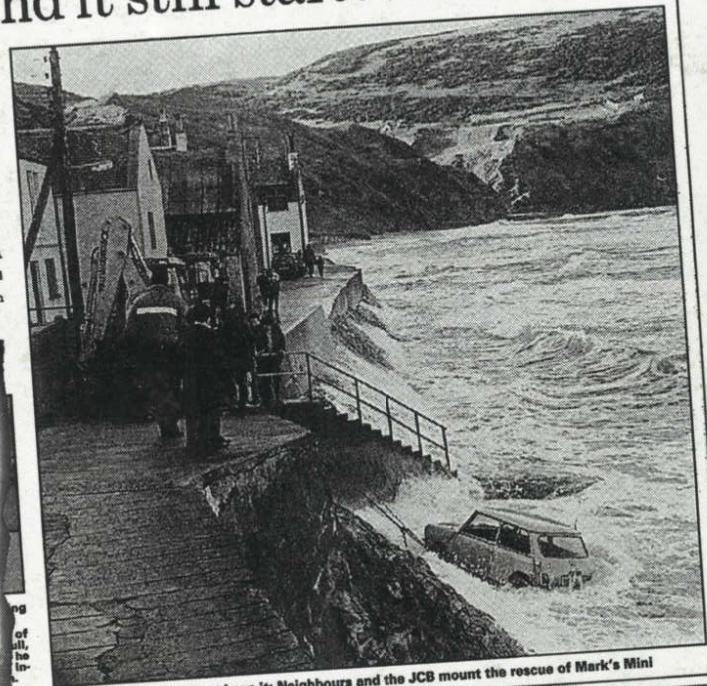
Slowly it was hauled from a watery grave. And, to his astonishment, when

Mr McDermott turned the ignition key it started first time.

The car, which has 89,000 miles on the clock and which he bought from his mother-in-law a year ago for £250, is now undergoing a few repairs. 'The subframe's a bit bent, there are panels denied and it's wet, but I'll drive it again,' said Mr McDermott, 32, a day centre officer. 'What really saved it was

the big community effort.' Neighbour John Cathcart said: 'It was amazing enough that it landed on its wheels, but to start first time is incredible.'

The car firm Rover said it was delighted to hear of the car's survival. A spokesman said the Mini's universal joints were produced from a design used for submarine conning control gear. 'Whether that's got anything to do with its survival, we don't know.'



The sea shall not have it: Neighbours and the JCB mount the rescue of Mark's Mini

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AND FROM £5,295*, IT'S HARDLY PUSHING THE BOAT OUT.

Go on, take the plunge. Drift on down to your Rover showroom and find out why, even after 30 years, the case for the Mini still holds water. For more information call 0800 145 245.



MINI

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