VINTAGE MOTORSPORTS FESTIVAL
AT THOMPSON SPEEDWAY
JUNE 27 - 29

PITTSBURGH INTERNATIONAL
RACEWAY COMPLEX
JULY 11 - 13

VINTAGE RACER GROUP

VRG NEWSLETTER

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WWW.VRGONLINE.ORG

VRG RACE SCHEDULE 2014

APRIL 11-13, 2014	VDCA WILD HARE RUN, VIRGINIA INTERNATIONAL RACEWAY, ALTON, VA Event Chairman: Mike Jackson, Tel: 561-622-7554 Email: vdca@vintagedrive.com
MAY 15-18, 2014	"JEFFERSON 500" AT SUMMIT POINT, WEST VIRGINIA (May 16-18) with FREE Open Practice Day May 15 - VRG Drivers School (May 14-15) 45th ANNIVERSARY OF FORMULA FORD in the USA for all Monoposto Legal FF (1968-81) VRG/Royale FF Challenge Series (First leg of three race meetings) IMSA RS/SCCA 2.5L Sedan Series **John Morton - Grand Marshall** Co-Event Chairmen: Cal Trumbo and Jim Karamanis, Tel: 304-449-7050 Email: j500@vrgonline.org
✓JUNE 27-29, 2014	THE VINTAGE MOTORSPORTS FESTIVAL AT THOMPSON SPEEDWAY MOTORSPORTS PARK - THOMPSON, CT OLDEST ROAD COURSE IN U.S., CO-SANCTIONED WITH THE VSCCA Event Chairman: Paul Bova and Co-Chairman Paul King, Tel: 203-329-9710 Email: paul@vrgonline.org
JULY 11-13, 2014	PVGP HISTORIC RACES, PITT-RACE WAMPUM, PA VRG/Royale FF Challenge Series (Second leg of three race meetings) Event Chairman: Keith Lawrence, Tel: 724-941-5330 Email: keith@vrgonline.org
AUG. 1-2, 2014	24th VINTAGE CELEBRATION - NEW HAMPSHIRE MOTOR SPEEDWAY Event Chairman: David Fromer, Tel: 802-253-8854 Email: oddjob@stowe.nu
SEPT. 19-21, 2014	NEW JERSEY HISTORIC RACES, NJMP MILLVILLE, NJ VRG/Royale FF Challenge Series (Third leg of three race meetings) Event Chairman: Butch O'Connor, Tel: 973-769-7707 Email: fiveoaks@ptd.net
OCT. 10-12, 2014	VRG AT THE GLEN, WATKINS GLEN, NY Event Chairman: Mike Lawton, 978-274-5935 Email: lawton@vrgonline.org
NOV. 28 - 30, 2014	TURKEY BOWL XIII, SUMMIT POINT, WEST VIRGINIA Event Chairman: Michael Oritt, Tel: 305-420-4929 Email: Michael@vrgonline.org

Visit the VRG website at www.vrgonline.org for changes and updates to the schedule.

PVGP Historics at PITT-Race
July 11 - July 13, 2014

The Pittsburgh Vintage Grand Prix is right around the corner and the VRG would love to have you attend. Mini is the Marque and we hope to have many in both are vintage and modern race groups.

For 2014, the Historic Races at Pittsburgh International Raceway opens on Friday July 11th with a full day of test & tune, then full days of racing on Saturday 7-12-14 and Sunday 7-13-14.

This event is known for providing great racing, tons of track time, PVGP Perks like no other event and, as usual for our VRG events, on schedule sessions.

A few things are new for this year but the great features of this event remain.

The paddock will be more accessible and spacious with the addition of lots more asphalt and hard surfaces, done in preparation for the track expansion to be completed in time for our 2105 event.

We again will have the ***Silent Auction, please bring items (car parts, household items etc) and Candy's rides*** at lunch both Sat & Sun, several special races including the Royale Racing Formula Ford Series race (2nd in the 3 race series) and the Victory Lane Magazine's FV Festival special race (prizes and awards for FV entrants), Saturday night Flashlight drags on the front straight, lots of included food and refreshments and much more for your low entry fee.

New for this year are:

- Choice of Friday PM or Saturday AM driver's meeting (you only have to attend one, so may give folks a chance to sleep in on Saturday).

- Paddock Crawl on Friday night (immediately after the driver's reception) – we hope to have 3 or 4 paddock "stations" set up for racers to mingle within their race group, have a drink and a bite to eat.

Anyone interested in hosting one of these party stations, please let me know. All you need to do it have a space available and maybe an extra cooler, tables, chairs and decorations as you see fit to represent whichever race group you select to host (small bore, big bore, MGs, Porsches or whatever).

The FF groups paddock crawl area is sponsored as was at the J500 by Royale Racing – anyone there can attest that this is one of the best parties of the season.

We are adding a new race group this year – NARRA Supercar Exhibition Race

Iron City was recently named the 2014 Beer Sponsor for the PVGP events. Lots of ice cold "iron" will be available and also be awarded to group "winners".

Remember, the PVGP offers full and prompt refunds if your tires do not hit the track. There is really no good reason to delay your entry!!!

Don't miss it – one of the best and most economical events on the calendar.

You may also be eligible to run at Schenley Park the following weekend and PITT-Race offers free trailer storage between events (as well as before for any Mini racers attending the Mid-Ohio event).

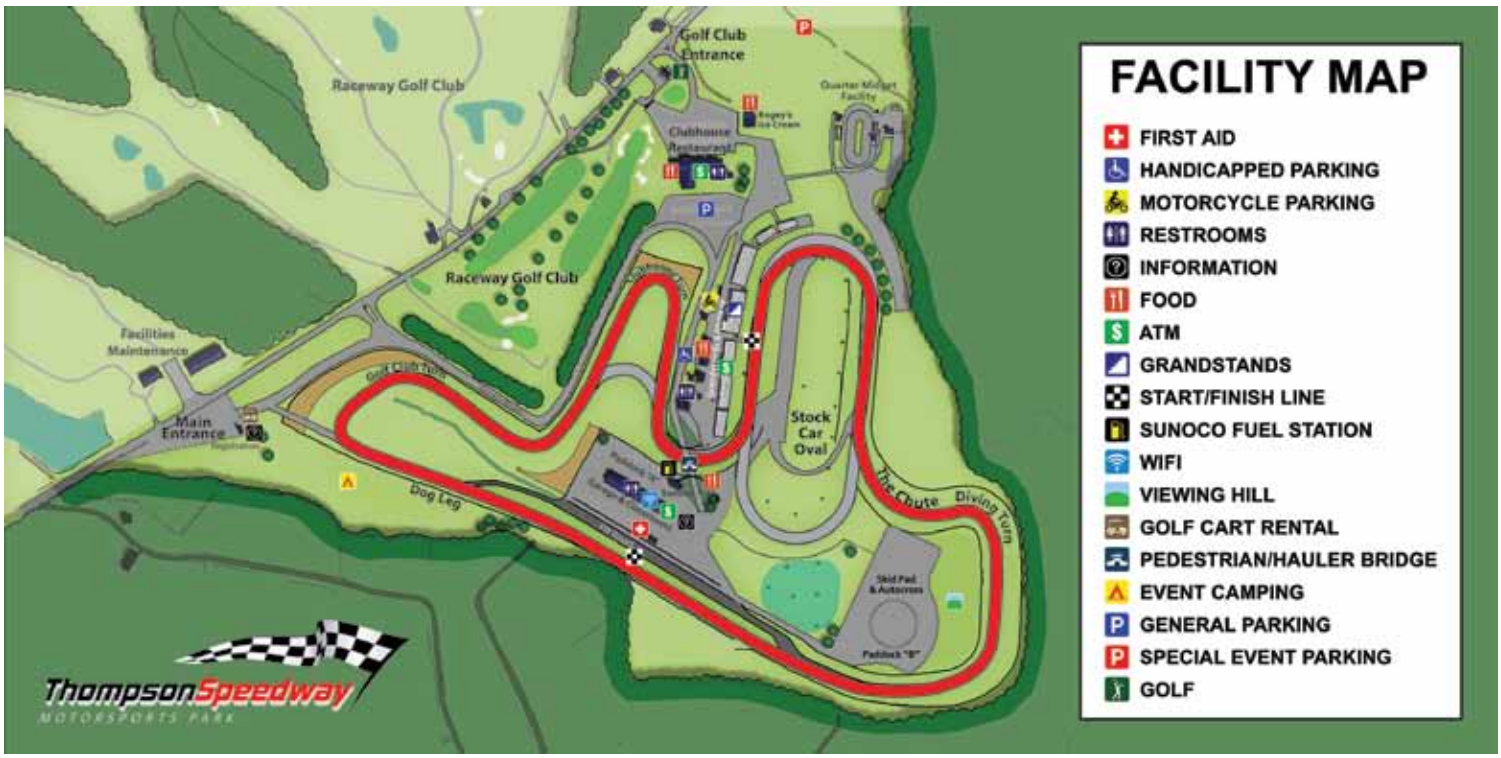
PVGP Historics at PITT-Race info - www.pvgp.org/drivers/pvgp-historic-races

PVGP Historics at PITT-Race tentative schedule - www.pvgp.org/vrschedule

PVGP Historics at PITT-Race & PVGP entry form - www.pvgp.org/entry

Keith Lawrence
VRG Event Chairman
Keith@VRGonline.org
412-770-8267

VINTAGE MOTOSPORTS FESTIVAL AT THOMPSON SPEEDWAY JUNE 27 - 29



Thompson Speedway - Born in a Hurricane

Our story begins on a quiet September afternoon in the farming community of Thompson, Connecticut. The year was 1938 and the chores of the day had been completed. Heavy rains had pelted the area a few days earlier, but on this September 21st, the day had been sunny and dry. To the people in this beautiful, yet quiet section of the state, it was time to relax after a hard day's work. Little did they know that the landscape and their lives were about to change forever.

With no advance warning, the skies turned black as huge storm clouds raced over the area. The "Long Island Express" was ready to bear down on New England. The affects were devastating as the famous 1938 hurricane roared through this quiet farming town. When the skies cleared, buildings, trees and just about anything in the storm's path had been destroyed. Included was the farm of John Hoenig and his family.

In the aftermath of the storm called the "Long Island Express" and The Great New England Hurricane, many chose to rebuild. Some chose to pull up stakes and move elsewhere. However, John Hoenig had a dream. If ever that dream were to become reality, now was the time.

He began to remove the downed trees and clear the land. He brought in a rock crusher, built a sawmill, and moved thousands of cubic yards of gravel. All of these items were needed to create his dream. Before long, the nation's first asphalt racetrack was beginning to take shape and John Hoenig's dream was coming true.

A Wild Hare's Tale of Adventure and Mis-Adventure

"Travels with Mack"

As I left my home in the Hudson Valley of NY on a clear, cool, sunny Wednesday with a few snow piles from my winter plowing efforts still in view, I was really looking forward to my annual weekend of vintage racing at VIR as well as seeing the newly paved north paddock. The weather forecast for the weekend was perfect: mid 70's and sunny with no mention of rain. The 600 mile trip was anticipated to be uneventful except that before I left I discovered the backup camera on the motor home was not working (it had worked fine when I parked the motor home for the winter). I ordered a new monitor which arrived just before I left, but not with enough time to install it before my departure. Once the trailer is connected I really don't use it anyway.

The trip down I-81 was pleasant with spring having appeared in the Shenandoah Valley if not yet in the Hudson Valley. Heading south, I passed a very serious accident in the northbound lanes just south of Carlisle, PA involving at least two tractor-trailers. One had the entire cab sheared off such that the cab was lying intact in the road and the bare tractor chassis was in the median. The detached trailer was also on its side. The other rig was on its side on the right shoulder. The entire northbound lane was closed and traffic was backed up for at least 12 miles from the exit where all traffic was being detoured around the incident. Needless to say, there were all kinds of emergency vehicles on the scene as well as local news media satellite trucks. I learned while listening to the radio on my return trip that there were two fatalities from that accident. I reminded myself to take it easy.

I spent Wednesday night in a Walmart parking lot off I-64 where I found out that the retractable steps on the motor home were not retracting. A liberal spray of WD-40 on all the pivot points freed the steps and I made a note to spray them again with lithium grease when I got home. Ah, the joys of RV ownership…always something.

Thursday morning I made my way south through the center of Virginia on Route 29. This is my favorite part of the trip, especially the scenery along Route 6 in the Rockfish Gap area between I-64, Route 150 and Route 29. I arrived at VIR about noon and registered with a warm welcome from Sandy Jackson who was on duty well in advance of the 1 PM registration time. The VIR real estate agent was in attendance and collected my $50 for RV paddock camping and $25 for electric hook-up. They later got me again in the paddock for another $25 for a registration sticker for my little Honda scooter. Although this is the only event I do each year at VIR, it was a real comfort to be told that the sticker was good for the whole year. The security folks were also all over protecting the new paddock asphalt requiring plywood or other protectors under all jack stands and jacks. It goes without saying that driving canopy stakes into the new asphalt was a no-no. No problem; I use two 5 gallon plastic water bottles as ballast on each corner of my canopy when on asphalt anyway.

The newly paved north paddock is a welcome improvement. No more of that coarse gray sand (or is fine gray gravel?) getting into everything. Apparently there had been some wet weather earlier in the week that got the paving a little behind schedule. There were no markings on the new surface. There was still a large unpaved section along the front row next

A Wild Hare's Tale of Adventure and Mis-Adventure, con't
"Travels with Mack"

to the pits between the garages and about half way to Start/Finish. I should say "old Start/Finish" as the tower has been removed, as has the tree that was there and the S/F line has been moved to the end

of pit exit. A new S/F tower, with access from the paddock, will soon be erected that will cross over the pit exit lane and be cantilevered out over the track. I also saw several new storm drains (at least I think some were new) to handle what will be exceptional runoff as well as a deeper collection pool down between the gas pumps and the track store.

The area up between the toilet/shower barn to the left of the false grid and the dyno has not been completely paved. The first quarter was newly paved but the rest has been left in gravel or red clay. I spoke with some of the security personnel who told me that the plan is to sow grass onto this area for those who want to paddock on grass. This is a great idea but they will need some decent top soil with lots of humus or peat moss if that grass is going to survive. Despite the rain earlier in the week this area was a dust bowl by Sunday.

I unloaded and got set up and made my way down to Tech so I would be all set for my first session on Friday. I got some help bleeding the brakes and clutch from VRG member Scott Janzen who was paddocked right across the lane with his beautiful BRG Triumph GT-6. There was a big Triumph contingent up in this area of the paddock as there is every year. I said hello again to Dean Tetterton who brought his TR-4 this year. VRG member Steve Groh was there with his recently-sold Triumph Spitfire and he was helping new owner Joe Lesnowski get sorted in the car. They also teamed up for the enduro. Parked right next to me was Pat Bungori and his wife (and super crew chief) Angela from near Wilson, SC. Pat's car is a well turned out MGB-GT. Next to him was parked Brian MacEachern who brought his beautiful and very fast Lotus XI Le Mans. With my car all set to go, we all sat down for a cold brew. Brian and I went over to VIR's Oak Tree Tavern (very convenient!) for an excellent dinner at a reasonable price and then turned in for the night.

Friday morning dawned clear and cool with a bluebird singing nearby, but quickly warmed up with brilliant sun. I started my car and noted a very slight misfire at idle. I went out in Group 1 for our first practice session at the very respectable hour of 11 AM feeling quite rusty despite participating in Paul Bova's Winter Warm-Up in February. I just took it easy warming the tires and oil and bedding in new brake pads and rotors. I noted that I still had a slight misfire which I thought would clear up, but didn't. As I started to pick up the pace I noted that the misfire was actually getting worse. Although it was still intermittent it was not only at idle but also mid- throttle and occasionally at top rpm with my tach needle bouncing around a bit. I decided to pit early and sort out what was going

A Wild Hare's Tale of Adventure and Mis-Adventure, con't
"Travels with Mack"

on before getting up to full speed.

Having had problems in the past with the Pertronix unit, I replaced that with my spare…no improvement. Then I borrowed a coil from Brian MacEachern and replaced that...still misfiring. I double checked the ignition timing…spot on. I removed the distributor cap and checked the contacts and resistance in the high-tension leads…all within normal values. I changed spark plugs for a brand new set of the same type (NGK BPR6EGP)…no better. Then just before my afternoon session I tried changing the plug to a type I used to use (NGK BP9ES)…no misfire! Our thinking was that the heat range of the NGK BPR6EGP was just too cold.

By now I had missed our afternoon session but needed to test on the track to see if my changes were going to be OK for the rest of the weekend. The Wild Hare race would be my test session. Even with a slight misfire at lower rpm the car pulled well and there was no misfire in the upper range which was what I was using anyway. I finished the race without incident.

Saturday was another beautiful day and it warmed up into the 80's as the day wore on. I wanted to turn on the AC in my motor home but it would not go on, nor would the furnace. I checked all the fuses and circuit breakers and everything seemed OK. This was weird but I really didn't have time to further trouble shoot the problem. It was time to get out on track.

The car ran well in both qualifying sessions that morning and I got down to a 2:27 with which I was quite pleased. The newly paved track is fabulous, despite the loss of the landmark "Oak Tree" at Turn 12. The surface is smooth with plenty of grip. There is new exit curbing with a rumble strip and then additional asphalt on the other side of the rumble strip at the exit of Turn 3 (NASCAR) and at the exit of Turn 12 (Oak Tree). There may be others but those are the ones I managed to actually use. There is also a little bump at the turn-in entrance to the upper esses that upset the car slightly and made it hard to have full confidence to enter the esses flat out. The car became re-settled before the left apex of the first ess, so once I got used to it I could enter the esses flat out. OK, so maybe just a little lift.

Things were coming together and the car was running well. The weather was perfect and I was all set for our first Group 1 Feature Race on Saturday afternoon. Noticing that the front tires on the Mini were showing some wear compared to the rears I rotated the tires to get more tread on the fronts for the upcoming race. As we started off on our pace lap I noted that the car pulled a bit to the left. Although I had checked my tire pressures just before I went up to the grid I figured that maybe the sun had heated up one side more than the other and that once I got them up to temperature it would even out again. Wrong! The car would only turn left. The left-handers on the pace lap felt great. The right-handers were impossible. I would have been perfect at the South Boston Speedway. I had to keep the wheel turned 45 degrees to the right to track straight. It didn't feel like a puncture but something was really wrong and was really accentuated by the front wheel drive. I put my hand up at the top of "roller coaster" and slowly made it back to the pits. After some investigation I discovered that I had about 1" of stagger on the front axle. No wonder it wanted to turn left… the right tire was almost an inch larger in circumference than the left. So much for my Group 1 Feature race.

I pulled off all the wheels and got out my spares too. I inflated all tires to the same psi and measured the circumference of each with a tape. I moved the well treaded tires from the front back to the rear where the stagger had no effect. I then selected two front tires with exactly the same circumference and the best tread. At least I was now set for Sunday. In order to make up for my lost Feature Race I got permission from Mike Jackson to enter the Sunday Enduro.

After such a disappointing day it was time to relax with a great group of friends at the VDCA dinner

A Wild Hare's Tale of Adventure and Mis-Adventure, con't
"Travels with Mack"

Saturday evening in the VIR Gallery. The Italian buffet was outstanding. Everyone was in good spirits and when Mike Jackson put on the bunny ears we all knew it was time for the annual Wild Hare Trophy presentation. Mike Jackson filled us in on this year's winners. Apparently, this year was unusual in that the winner was actually the first starting car, a Bobsy FV driven by Bob Clarke from Mt. Juliet, TN. The second place car, a red MGA, was driven by Stan Heath of Knoxville, TN. For over a decade the second place (and more prestigious) trophy has been designed and built by the very same Bob Clarke that won this year. Each year Bob makes another trophy that somehow weaves in the Wild Hare theme. He funds it himself. The years Bob has been unable to make the event he has still made the award and gotten it to VDCA in time for the presentation.

Sunday morning was another beauty. I can›t remember finer weather at any event and Sunday was forecast to be in the mid 80›s.

As I walked around the paddock taking a few pictures I ran across Mike Jackson with his radio controlled aircraft on his way to the skid pad for a little flight training.

Several competitors were beginning to leave; some with mechanical problems and some with obligations at home. I went out for the early warm up to confirm that I had solved the tire stagger issue and got ready for the enduro with a full fuel cell.

Being gridded 29th, the green flag flew when I was just coming out of "hog pen". I couldn't see the flag but everyone took off and so did I. We had a good first few laps until we went full course yellow so that the safety crew could recover Larry Smith's car, which, it turns out, had cracked a piston. As we were still circulating under full course caution my car started handling funny again. But this time it was different. It felt sort of like a flat tire but not quite. I was also losing my brakes. In any case, I knew that something was seriously wrong and I pulled off on the crossover road to the Patriot Course. A quick look around the car showed all tires were intact, but the big nut on the end of the left front CV stub axle was missing. In fact, so was the threaded shaft that the nut and cotter pin were on. The threaded portion had sheared off at the base. The only thing holding the wheel on was the disc brake caliper and pads! Looking back, it was

A Wild Hare's Tale of Adventure and Mis-Adventure, con't
"Travels with Mack"

eerily prophetic that Tivvy and I had just been talking earlier that morning about magna-fluxing these parts. Thank goodness this happened under full course yellow and not at speed. My car was recovered on a tilt-bed by the VIR safety crew, who by the way were extremely careful to load and unload my car to avoid creating any more damage. Those guys are the best… very professional.

So my weekend was done. This meant that I would also miss the Group 1 Sunday afternoon sprint race. But I still had one more nightmare left before I departed.

Back in the paddock I loaded the car on the trailer with some help from my neighbors and started packing up with the intention of getting an early start for the long trip home. With everything packed up and loaded I started the engine on the motor home and turned on the AC (not the AC in the coach which still wasn't working) to cool off the cab. My plan was to make a final pit stop and wash up before leaving, so I shut the door to keep the AC cooling inside. I did my usual pre-flight walk around to make sure that everything was in order and went to get into the cab. The door was locked! All the doors were locked! With the engine running! The motor home has a central RF keyless locking system and when I turned the key to start the engine I must have inadvertently pushed the locking button on the key fob but never heard the doors lock over the noise of the diesel engine.

Now I was locked out with the engine running. Arrrrrrrrrrrrgh! Of course I have a spare key, but it is hanging on the hook inside the coach. After several phone calls to AAA and 30-40 minutes of impatient waiting while I watched everyone else leave the paddock, Reggie from AAA came and saved the day. He had the door open with a wedge and a long wire hook in just a few minutes. Thank goodness my trip home was uneventful.

Yet despite all the bad juju or karma or whatever you

want to call it, I did have a fun weekend. The weather was outstanding and after the winter we had it was great to soak up some sun. The new pavement on the VIR full course was awesome as was the fully paved paddock. These are great improvements to an already superb track. But the best part was getting together with those good friends that I only see at the track, picking right up where we left off last season and having a great time. And yes, a few of us did close down the Wild Hare dinner party. I'm already looking forward to next year. Oh yeah, did I mention that the back-up camera on the motor home mysteriously started working on the trip home as did the AC…go figure. I'm going to take that as a good omen.

Mack McCormack

VDCA/VRG Wild Hare at VIR

Photo's by F&S Photography

Open Wheel Race Report From VIR

If you missed the Wild Hare you missed a treat – racing like it used to be (this is of course an old fogey reporting – my first Grand Prix was 1954 at Silverstone when Froilan Gonzalez won in a Ferrari from my hero Mike Hawthorn. 30 cars started 15 finished. (Different days). The VDCA/BMW meeting was laid back, the weather glorious every day, and the new tarmac track was a treat to drive with lots of track time.

I had a call from Bill Hollingsworth the other day, which I foolishly answered. He was checking if I had made contact with Bob Bruce who was missing in action for the Jefferson and I had asked if Bob was OK. "By the way" Bill said at the end of the conversation, your VRG article on the Wild Hare will be due in two weeks". "What article?" I foolishly inquired – so I take no responsibility.

For me this was a welcome return after a six-year layoff, albeit without my trusty Merlyn that now resides in Montana. Big mistake selling that – late life crisis. So a fresh car, now a really aged driver - big challenges. How did David Fairchild learn to go so fast? Much has changed - the track is different in places after the resurface, but clearly quicker. Peter Krause has spent years trying to get below 2 minutes – hell of an expense resurfacing the track to get there. Of course Peter puts it down to having such a great coach! The oak tree at Oak Tree is sadly missed; they will have to rename the corner – it's a bit odd calling it Oak Tree when there isn't one. Perhaps "Late Oak Tree" or "Oak Tree No More" (apologies to Python).
At my age there is no excuse for being seduced by a shiny car, but there we are – no fool like an old fool. This Crossle 20F came from a renowned prep shop. The springs and dampers seemed to be off a Formula 1 car, not a soft sprung flexible aged space frame. The engine was indeed in need of a refresh, but we missed the need for new sleeves and crank. The major issue are the brakes, which have not yet been transferred from the Crossle catalogue. After much effort we improved from no visible sign of slowing down to having rear brakes, as to having front brakes – not so much.

The Sports 2000, Sports Racers and FF/CF cars were run together and were generally well behaved looking out for one another.

The first practice was new for everybody but Peter (whose web site indicates he has been doing lapping sessions for weeks on the new surface) so it was no surprise in 3 laps he was immediately down to 2 minutes and 2 seconds - faster than anyone else. For the Fords, Doug Meis opened up in the 13's, not shabby but as you will see, way off the real pace. It was good to see Tivvy out and also Brian Thomas, who brought his delightful Lotus 51 out after a year or two's layoff. While at the back Scott Nettleship was after a different kind of record with a 13minutes 54.7 sec lap – must be a record! And me – well I wondered who were all these lunatics passing me on all sides. I managed 2 minutes 30 holding my breath and eyes out on stalks.

In the second qualifying, Peter was tantalizingly close at 2:00.078 but his unfair advantage was closing down to 1 second. Doug continued to lead the Fords with a 12.38, comfortably ahead of Fairchild in the high 14's. I was really getting down to it in the 28's and driving more in the mirror than forward.

By practice 3 Peter was engaged in driver training (his own?) and laurels went to Ben Sinnott breaking into the 1:59's along with Hobart Buppert and David Gussack. By this time I had fixed the jamming throttle (every time I put what I laughingly call the brakes - on), which was both embarrassing – I discovered my engine can do 8000, can yours? And the wrong sort of exciting! Put a bit of stiffness in the dampers and did a 22.7 – only 10 seconds to go. But wait, Fairchild is in the 08's – must be a timing error.

Practice 4 saw Buppert on top with a '57. He seemed to pass me every other lap –into turn 1, in the esses up the hill, into Oak Tree, there was no end – I knew he was coming when the ground shook (nothing to do with earth moving).

Open Wheel Race Report From VIR, con't

And so to the Saturday race. Bill said "describe it from the back" – all well and good but there is not much going on back there, other than first place Buppert on his own, and then a train of sports racers whizzing by led by Ben Sinnot with Peter right up his chuff (its an English term) and a big gap to Mark Coombs who was going at it with John Kramer. A little farther back, a postage stamp covered Asa Candler, Jim Hallman and Nathan Scigliano. Meanwhile Fairchild was mixing it with the S2000's and 38 seconds ahead of the 2nd Ford, Scott Nettleship. I knew that the hot cam and twin 40DCOE's would give David an edge! Where is Bob Bruce when you need him? Oh, and I managed a 15.9 on my way at the back having put some stiffness into the dampers, and removed the rear roll bar - egged on by Bill Demarest who I passed. He would not stay passed and kept passing me back!

The Sunday S2000 race was close run through the field, with Mark Coombs stepping up a gear to get fastest lap, but the wily Krause kept him at bay by just 3 tenths. A little way behind, David Gussack & John Kramer were going at it separated by just 2 tenths as they crossed the line for 3rd and 4th. Asa once again outfoxed Nathan with Jim right behind.

Sunday was a quieter and slower affair as only Hobart and a few Fords stayed on (including me – seat time, seat time). Doug ran off with the Ford race, followed at a respectable distance by James Britnell.

So a beautiful weekend quietly came to a close, with effusive thanks to all the VDCA team for a well run show. A continuous source of beer supplied by the pit lane bimbo was a vitally important part of the post race cool down and a steady trip back to Annapolis with a laundry list of to-do's before the Jefferson, and ruminating on the Merlyn which would get around in the 12's on the old surface. See you at Summit.

Bernard Bradpiece

VRG Mini Racing Team takes on Can-Am Mini Challenge at Mid Ohio

June 26-29 at Mid-Ohio Sports Car Course, Lexington, OH, five Vintage Racer Group Minis will take to the track and compete for the win in the Can-Am Mini Challenge, and help to celebrate 55 years of Minis.

Jim Arnett, Rick Little, Mack McCormack, Nick Michael, and Ian Wisbon will be running in a fifty Mini field, across five classes. The field is comprised of everything from period correct vintage racing Minis, to SCCA GTL Minis, and even a racing Mini Marcos. Competitors from across the USA, Canada, and even a few from the United Kingdom will be traveling to Mid-Ohio to see whose Mini is the best. There will be a few prizes to be won for the top place finishers, a cash prize for the slowest finishing Mini, and another trophy and cash prize for the top finishing female racer. So everyone has a chance to take something home.

Competition looks to be pretty stiff, but the VRG Mini Team are by no means slouches (author excluded, who is still very much learning). VRG President Mack always puts in a solid drive in his #109 Louvers Unlimited sponsored Mini Cooper S, and Mid-Ohio should suit his speed and precision perfectly. Recently acquired rookie sensation Nick Michael is taking seconds off every session out in his #15 Cooper S, look for a strong showing here. Jim Arnett drives the Mini Cooper S everyone pictures when they think of a Mini, #27, red with Union Jack roof - sponsored by Volunteers for Medical Engineering, and Rick Little is campaigning his #960 Rusty Nuts Mini. I hear BMC may be in the crowd looking for new Works drivers, VRG should have plenty to offer, so look for the VRG Mini Racing team to do a European tour in the future.

The weekend will also include a few Mini specific social events, the highlight being the Friday night Ohio Mini Owners sponsored cook-out; your author will be awarding a PVGP race weekend entry in the raffle for a lucky Mini racer, as Mini is the Marque of the year. I am certainly looking forward to returning to Mid-Ohio, as a young lad I spent most summers watching the PPG/CART race outside the Esses. So look for photos and a report after the event to see how the VRG Mini Race Team finished. If you're a competitor in the Vintage Grand Prix of Mid-Ohio, or just spectating, stop by, say hello, and see what 50 Minis going into the Keyhole looks like. The outside of the Esses will also be a prime spot. I promise it's a spectacle you'll not want to miss!

Ian Wisbon
#7 Austin Mini "Duckworth"

VDCA/VRG Wild Hare at VIR

Bill Hollingsworth asked me to write a recap of the 12th annual VDCA/VRG Wild Hare race April 11-13th. Unfortunately he asked me about a month after the event, and in a weak moment I unwisely agreed to do so. Every race article usually includes comments on the race organizers, the weather, the track, the party(s), the food, and oh yeah, the racing. So here goes.

VDCA runs five races a year, two of which are larger ones and the Wild Hare with VRG is one of the larger ones. There were over 140 vintage cars plus the BMWs. To be able to afford the track, VDCA takes on one or more partners. This year the sole partner was the BMW club, which were good partners. As with VRG, VDCA has no paid staff . Mike Jackson and his wife Sandy once again did a great job with contracts, race schedule, registration, and keeping things on time. There were several "incidents," but fortunately not many.

The weather was as good as it gets! 70s by day and 60s by night. No rain, no overheating, no cool suits, a sweatshirt in the morning and night. Cool sleeping for the campers, but not too cold. A great time to be in western Virginia!

VIR is always in great condition; clean, park-like, and well maintained. And this year was no exception. The VIR track was newly paved and expanded in some turns, and almost everyone's times improved by 1-2 seconds or more. The oak tree was gone, the track widened a bit to the left after the turn, and the worker station moved to the left of the track. The only complaint I heard was there was no rubber on the track to show some people the line!! Really!!

We arrived at the track mid-afternoon on Thursday with the RV and trailer, and fortunately found a spot with power some friends had roped off. The paddock was almost completely newly paved (no more tiny bits of gravel getting into everything!) with one area roped off and not useable. That made it a bit tight for parking, but the paving was a nice improvement.

Friday night there was a social at the Pagoda patio, with Peter Krause sponsoring a couple kegs of beer (Yea Peter!!). It was a great opportunity to catch up with friends we hadn't seen since last year, and meet some new ones. Saturday, the catered Italian dinner at the big "barn," was excellent, and the program was thankfully short. Several of us began telling stories, and ended up closing the place!

The Wild Hare Race gives only two trophies , recognizing the first and second place Wild Hare Run finishers. The Wild Hare is a pursuit race which ideally would have the entire field finishing at the same time. The staggered start is based on early qualifying times, and it's a challenge to work out the start order and times. I often think the organizers randomly select the winner, but I expect there is a science to it that I just don't understand. Bob Clark won the race. The coveted trophy is the second place trophy – the "Bunny's Butt" trophy (usually resembling road kill) which went to Stan Heath. His son Sterling won it last year!

Also, every year the Triumph "Ghetto" presents the Martha MacDougall Golden Sneaker Trophy. No one (except the Ghetto) knows the parameters for the award, but it's suspected to go to the nicest guy with the straightest teeth and Ipana smile…. or not!! This year they decided to retire the trophy and give it to Mike and Sandy Jackson. As Mike doesn't meet any of the parameters, your guess is as good as mine as to why they did that!

There was some fantastic racing as usual! I tried to find some recollections from folks while at Summit Point, and here are a few:

There was a good mix of Group 2/5/7 cars, with lots of S2000s. There were some special cars present, including Larry Wilson's RP17 Royale. It had problems and he turned to his Brabham BT29. A nice second choice! There was a good group of Formula Fords, including David and son Scott Fairchild. Hobart Buppert in his beautiful Lola T70 won both the Saturday and Sunday races, with Ben Sinnott (Lola T90) 2nd and Peter Krause (84 Tiga SC83) 3rd on Saturday. In the Sunday race Ben's clutch failed, and

VDCA/VRG Wild Hare at VIR con't

Doug Meis (Lola T340) and James Britnell (Hawke DL2a) were 2nd and 3rd. It was a nice mix of cars and courteous driving. Ben also won the enduro.

In the S2000 race, Mark Coumbe led for 8 of the 10 laps, but Peter Krause passed him in turn 3 on the next to last lap, and won in a relatively "elder" car.

In the Formula V races, Mike Ennis and Mike Jackson showed why people like to race and watch the FVs. They spent two races no more than two car lengths apart, with Ennis winning both by thousands of a second. It came down to who would be second at Oak Tree on the last lap, as he could draft then pass by the end of the back straight, and hold on until the finish. Mike Ennis was able to do just that in the second race and pull off the win.

In my Group 3 races, we had a nice mix of cars, and saw very tight competition at the sharp end with Craig Chima victorious in both Saturday and Sunday's races. In fact, his best lap times rivaled those in Group 6/8. Craig in his '62 Lotus Super 7 along with Denny Wilson in his distinctive yellow & black Mecum '62 Lotus Super 7 and Alan Tosler in his '66 Lotus Elan continued to lower their best lap times throughout the qualifying sessions leading to some exciting racing. Denny finished second in both races with Alan a close third. Tom Grudovich in his '60 Lola Mk1 Sports Racer on skinny Dunlop tires was fourth in Saturday's race but DNS on Sunday with clutch problems. Group 3 was full with 34 entries and a keen observer would have seen much exciting racing throughout the field. Stacey Bondon in her Morgan was the lead e-production car on Sunday, and I lucked into that lead on Saturday when she had a problem. My Elva Courier ran well, but I couldn't keep up with Stacey, and I finished 7th both days.

I regret I didn't get reports from the other races. Thanks to Tom Grudovich, Mike Ennis, and Peter Krause for their inputs.

Hank Giffin

VIR and Formula Fords

Well, I failed to provide any real time reports and news from the weekend at VIR. When it was all said and done we had a respectable 14 Formula Fords entered for the weekend and they were evenly split with 7 apiece pre '72 FFs and 7 Club Fords.

The big news of the weekend was the freshly repaved VIR track (and paddock). The brand new asphalt is super grippy and Scott Fairchild used it to great effect resetting the track record for vintage FFs with a spectacular lap of 2:08.0. Scott went on to dominate the Saturday Feature race as well.

In the pre '72 division, Jamie Britnell came all the way down from Canada and was the class of the field with first in class in both Saturday and Sunday races.

I had an up and down weekend, dropping out of the Saturday race with a loose distributor on lap one but came back to win the Sunday race (with an asterisk because Dave and Scott Fairchild had already loaded up and left).

Doug Meis

2014 J500 VRG Drivers School

The 2014 VRG Drivers School at Summit Point marked the program's 10th anniversary, we think. Frankly, little attention was paid to the school's tenure as we were for the first time conducting our school on the Summit Point Raceway (SPR) main circuit. For the past three years the VRG School has been held on the Shenandoah circuit, which provided for the first time a race track dedicated to the driving school. Albeit a great improvement over NHMS, it was nevertheless *not* the same track on which students would be competing the following weekend, and this proved to be a distinct disadvantage. Further, the Shenandoah circuit is rather compact, offering less run-off room than average, and students were reluctant to get their cars as out of shape as we'd like. The basic philosophy of the VRG school exercises is to have students spend as much time as possible, purposely driving their cars at and beyond their limits, so should they happen to arrive there by accident later on they'll have some clue as to what to do about it.

For these several reasons we were very pleased at the prospect of conducting the school on the SPR main circuit, and despite predictable (and non-predictable) teething issues, the event was successful. The greatest benefit, of course, was the students' opportunity to learn the proper lines, braking points, etc. for SPR. In past J500 events many students were notably off-pace in the early sessions, but this issue was significantly diminished as a consequence of running the school on the main track. The SPR paddock area also proved very effective for our braking exercises. The delineation that exists where pavement meets grass is both physical and psychological, creating within students a reluctance to risk crossing that line. Throw a bunch of cones out into an expanse of pavement, however, such as that in the SPR paddock, and those inhibitions are notably diminished. Where we scratched our heads at Shenandoah trying to figure out how to get students to push the limits, in the SPR paddock we had to occasionally remind students that there really were limits. Lastly, the SPR skid pad proved to be somewhat better. It's over-grown in the center, requiring two instructors to monitor the entire pad, but it's also roughly 25' larger in diameter and thus better suited to our race-prepared cars.

In its ten or so years the VRG Drivers School has been conducted at New Hampshire Motor Speedway, Pittsburgh International Race Circuit, Shenandoah and now Summit Point Raceway. This phased emigration has resulted in steady improvement in the school, while at the same time giving us the materials needed to run our school at any of these several different venues. The VRG Drivers School sells out nearly every year, so should we decide to add a second full school – or move the school – we will be well prepared.

Ed Valpey

VRG/Royale Racing Formula Ford Challenge Series: Round One: Summit Point

The first laps of the VRG/Royale Racing Formula Ford Challenge Series were run during the 2014 edition of the Jefferson 500 at Summit Point Motorsports Park. Celebrating the 45th anniversary of this historic race car, the series is sponsored by the VRG and Royale Racing. The series is open to all Formula Ford (1968-81) makes of the car. This event was the first of the three race series that will continue when the VRG visits the Pittsburgh International Race Complex in July and concludes at New Jersey Motorsports Park in September.

A total of 39 Formula Fords were in the paddock and 31 cars took the green flag in Saturday's feature race. A large field of open wheel cars left the grid behind the Shelby Cobra Daytona pace car piloted by the Grand Marshal, John Morton. Despite the large field of cars, everyone made it through the iconic turn one at Summit and the race was a good one. Lots of passing and a three way battle for the lead among three drivers, Scott Fairchild, Glenn Taylor and Joe Griffen made for a very thrilling first edition of the FF Challenge Series! At the finish, it was Scott Fairchild taking the win in his 1978 Zink Z-10 over Joe Griffen. Fairchild had good words to say about the track crew for the clean up after a major oil down which had delayed the start of the feature.

A couple of notables in this race, including a 5th place finish by James Britnell in a 1970 Hawke DL2A. He was the highest finisher in the typically heavier (1968-72 generation) version of the Formula Ford. Participating in the race was Frank DelVecchio, who competed with John Morton (Jefferson 500 Grand Marshal) and Bill Scott (late owner of Summit Point) during one of the first FF events at Summit Point event in 1971. Bob Romanowsky celebrated his birthday by leaving the weekend with a second place in the points! It was very good to see our very own Bill Hollingsworth back on track. A result of an unfortunate shunt at Lime Rock Park last fall, Bill had to spend part of his winter getting the 1978 Crossle back in racing form. We are happy to report that Bill and his beautiful blue FF looked terrific at the Jefferson!

The Formula Ford / Royale Racing Challenge point leader heading to the Pittsburgh International Race Complex (PIRC) at Beaver Falls PA during the PVGP will be Joe Griffen. Bob Romanowsky is in the second spot and rounding out the top three in points is Jim MacNichol. The FF Challenge Series features a unique point system giving participants a chance to earn points in addition to "on track" performance. Points are also awarded for participating in "off track' activities, like the "Paddock Party" and helping other racers during the weekend! When I spoke to Joe Griffen regarding his points lead, he indicated that his decision to jump in and become the cook at the "Friday Night Paddock Party" may have been "just enough" to squeak into the points lead over this competitive field!

Next to Indy's Borg Warner or the Grandfather clock at Martinsville, the most coveted motorsport trophy may be the FF Challenge series "Racing Hat"! Complete with goggles, these are "one of kind" creations handcrafted by Tracy Thacker Hyatt. Be sure to check out the photo page to see for yourself!

If the next leg of the Formula Ford/Royale Racing Challenge Series is anything like the event at Summit Point, the fans at the Pittsburgh Vintage Grand Prix are in for a treat when the open wheel pilots hit the track in July!

Bill Stoler

Jefferson 500 2014

photos by Bill Stoler

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2014 JEFFERSON 500
45th Anniversary of Summit Point

The impressive turnout of cars for this year's Jefferson 500 was evidence not only of the popularity of the Summit Point venue, but also of the friendly, inviting atmosphere promoted by the event chairs, Jim Karamanis and Cal Trumbo, along with all of the VRG volunteers, the track staff and the Washington DC Region of the SCCA.

The secret gem for many was the inclusion of the great John Morton and his lovely lady, Sylvia Wilkinson, as honored guests of the event. Celebrating John's storied career in a variety of cars from Shelby Cobras and Formula Fords through his IMSA 2.5 Challenge Championships with the Brock Racing Enterprises (BRE) Datsun 510, the Group 44 IMSA GTP Jaguars (based in nearby Winchester, Virginia), Porsche 962's and the mighty Nissan GTP-ZX prototypes of the late 1980's and early 1990's, John has been quiet and unassuming, but incredibly quick and smart in every race car he's ever driven! Sylvia Wilkinson, author of several books including "The Stainless Steel Carrot," an illuminating view of pro racing in the early days, was equally engaging.

Morton saw his first race at Road America in 1957 and dropped out of Engineering School at Clemson University to go to work for Carroll Shelby in 1963. He drove with the great Ken Miles in a 427 Cobra at the Sebring 12-Hours in 1964, the year of the torrential, flooding rains. Bad car for that! A remarkable breadth of cars followed after that, when Morton was in demand for anything and everything with wheels, even Indy cars! Unlike many drivers of the day (and even today), John Morton was not one to crow on and on about his exploits, he just kept his head down, engineered and drove the cars, all cars, as well as he could. A life well lived and quite a wit, as well!

It was a pleasure for everyone to hear Morton speak at the dinner Saturday night. The best picture on my Facebook feed was Jim Karamanis and John Morton, fingers dirty both, repairing the shift linkage in a race car. None of this clean, "banquet circuit" for John, he gets his hands dirty, still! Universally, one of the most popular podium pictures was with Morton for the special races. I was particularly touched by Morton's reference to the brilliance of three-time National Champion (and President's Cup winner) John Baucom's mighty drive in his yellow Fiat 124 Coupe in the 2.5 Challenge Feature race. Morton said he was entranced by the calm but blindingly fast navigation around the tricky Summit Point Main track demonstrated in all of John Baucom's on-track sessions. Fantastic stuff!

The track walk to benefit High Performance Heroes Friday evening was even better attended than the last two years. Dave Gussack and Ed Mettelman were great "visual landmarks" in the distance on their bikes and the addition of a handy golf cart with a small public address speaker saved my voice! Every time I walk this track, even after twenty-eight years of coming here, I learn something new.

Folks must have had a good time and really gotten something out of it, because we SMASHED the donation total realized previously by almost 50%. Over three thousand dollars were raised for this worthy cause! It was particularly apt to see one of the early HPH drivers, Liam Dwyer, who was present at this event, win the Tudor United Sports Car Continental Tire race on Memorial Day weekend at Lime Rock one week later! Bravo, Liam! You are STILL, one of us!

On to the race results, found most easily here:https://www.race-monitor.com/Results/Race/14297

A few special feature races offered a great opportunity for drivers with similar interests to congregate at this friendly event. Brian Walsh and Jim Karamanis have made the Jefferson 500 a home for the great, small sedans that many of us grew up driving on the street. BMW 2002s, Alfa GTVs and Ford Pintos were well represented on the grid this year, with spirited racing throughout the field. While John Baucom put on a clinic in his immaculate Fiat 124 Coupe, a car similar to several that ran in period, the scrappy racing behind was a pleasure for all the spectators and crew alike. I was very impressed with Vince Vaccaro›s Alfa drive, «old reliable» Ed McMahon›s Pinto drive and Joe Liles› excellent BMW drive (until gremlins reared their head). My friend Bob Ball is always spectacular to watch, as well as a treat to race with - lots of fun with the 2.5 Challenge crowd.

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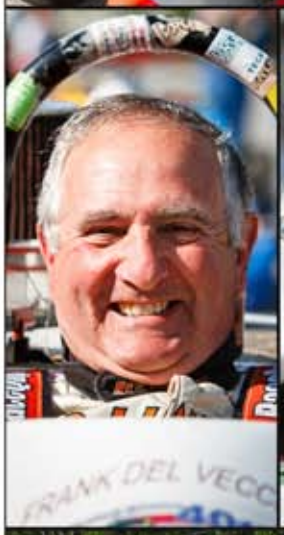

VRG/Royale Racing FF Challenge Series Race One

2014 JEFFERSON 500

45th Anniversary of Summit Point (CONT.)

Another great magnet for entries and a race that attracted lots of attention leading up to Saturday›s contest was the Formula Ford feature. Always a friendly place for Fords, VRG›s Formula Ford «community» is closely knit and offers a supportive environment to all those interested in racing these seminal cars. Speaking of which, there were some seminal drivers present! One of my favorite guys, in any car or out of it (and especially sharing an adult beverage), is the wonderful and VERY experienced Frank Del Vecchio. Frank, often on the microphone at Pro events at NJMP, still races hard after more than four decades behind the wheel, most recently in the big time competing in a Porsche at the Rolex 24 at Daytona last year! It was fun to hear Del Vecchio reminisce about the early days of Summit Point and his racing at the then «new» facility, along with his friendship on and off the track with the late Bill Scott. Frank knocked the rust off pretty quickly and showed well. Other «regulars» included father and son David and Scott Fairchild, the latter the quickest driver of them all and a great ambassador to the sport! My old friend Denny Austin, from whom I learned how to drive this track more than two and a half decades ago, had great fun in his Club Ford. All in all, it was a terrific gathering of Formula Fords and Club Fords (34).

Porsches are always a popular ingredient at the Jefferson 500. The Eifel Cup race was no disappointment, with position changes all the way up to the checkered flag! It was nice to see Olga Reindlova represent the marque so well as she made big progress through the field and ended up on the podium, following Dave Gussack›s stellar drive. Pete Kauffman and Ed Mettelman both looked good, too. The parity of the cars was incredible, with MANY competitors' fastest laps within a few tenths or even hundredths of a second. Who says this isn›t competitive racing? The spectators really enjoyed the variety and the closeness of the racing in the Eifel Cup group.

While being some of the «younger» examples of cars present, a strong turnout of Sports 2000›s continue to support the event, with many long-time VRG members graduating to these marvelous, purpose-built, safe sports racers. Perennial winner and hot shoe Ben Sinnott continued to turn record lap times on his way to second overall in the Brian Redman Enduro, but suffered a mechanical malady which took him out of a healthy lead in the Sports 2000 Feature. I had fun but was unaware that I had won the race until after rolling through the pit lane with all the commensurate thumbs up from everyone, so far ahead was Sinnott when he pulled in! It was great to see one of the pioneers of the Vintage Sports 2000 movement, longtime National SCCA racer, Triumph and Formula Atlantic driver, Peter Gates, podium along with Simon Green, who drives an eponymously colored Shrike, after their great drives! My favorite cars were Pete Padley›s immaculate March and Tom LaCosta›s «vintage» paint-jobbed Lola, the latter in the same scheme as John Surtees winning Can Am Lola of 1966! The VS2-NA group did a great job hosting parties and driving people towards attending this great race weekend. Scott Gates was there helping his father, Denny Gernert was assisting his sons who were driving their family Swift, Brent and Bryan. It›s truly a family friendly group!

My «drive of the weekend» goes to Jim Freeman, in his Can-Am Matich SR3. This is not only because it was the quickest car of the weekend, it was because of Jim›s great progress in nearly MATCHING the lightning-fast Dave Handy›s times in a BIG car on this FAST circuit! Jim has done a marvelous job of rededicating himself to the study of «how to go fast,» and his stellar drive on the second day of the Enduro was magical to watch. Hats off to Jim Freeman!

The (mostly) good weather(Friday morning was a wash out) certainly helped encourage paddock pleasure and even though the paddock was busy and crowded, everyone was smiling by the end of the weekend, anxious to do it again and looking forward to next year.

A big thumbs-up to Jim, Cal and ALL the countless VRG volunteers that make this club and this event a continuing success. See you next year!

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Ed Valpey, Director

You may also contact:
Mack McCormack e-mail: mack@vrgonline.org
phone: 518-527-9918

William Hollingsworth - Editor
wihiii@aol.com

Darry Bova - Layout and Production
darry@vrgonline.org

Bill Stoler Photography
www.billstoler.com
wrstoler@comcast.net

PITT - RACE July 11 - 13,

Auction Items

Please don't forget to bring an item for our charity auction.!!

As in previous years we will hold an auction at PITT - RACE to raise money for the PVGP charities.

If you have an item kicking around your garage or basement that you no longer need or want please *go get it and put it in your trailer right now. It does not have to be car related. Bring some things for the ladies.*

Our auction is only as successful as the items that we offer. Let's make this year's auction a record breaker!