VINTAGE RACER GROUP
VRG
JUNE 2015 VOL. 12.2
WWW.VRGONLINE.ORG

PITTSBURGH INTERNATIONAL RACEWAY COMPLEX

JULY 10 - 12

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

NEWSLETTER

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

VRG RACE SCHEDULE 2015

MARCH 7, 2015	PITTSBURG RACERS DINNER (Date is tentative) Event Chairman: Keith Lawrence, Tel: 724-941-5330 Email: keith@vrgonline.org
APRIL 10-12, 2015	VDCA WILD HARE RUN, VIRGINIA INTERNATIONAL RACEWAY, ALTON, VA Event Chairman: Mike Jackson, Tel: 561-622-7554 Email: vdca@vintagedrive.com
MAY 13-17, 2015	"JEFFERSON 500" AT SUMMIT POINT, WEST VIRGINIA (May 16-18) with FREE Open Practice Day May 14 - VRG Drivers School (May 13-14) Featured Marque is TRIUMPH, 14th Annual Triumph Kas Kastner Cup (Kas Kastner will be in attendance) IMSA RS/SCCA 2.5L Sedan Series **Brian Redman - Grand Marshall** Co-Event Chairmen: Cal Trumbo and Jim Karamanis, Tel: 304-449-7050 Email: j500@vrgonline.org
JUNE 18-21, 2015	THE VINTAGE MOTORSPORTS FESTIVAL AT THOMPSON SPEEDWAY MOTORSPORTS PARK - THOMPSON, CT OLDEST ROAD COURSE IN U.S., CO-SANCTIONED WITH THE VSCCA Event Chairmen: Paul King, Chairman, and Paul Bova, Co-Chairman, Tel: 508-847-4809 Email: paulking@charter.net
✓JULY 10-12, 2015	PVGP HISTORIC RACES, PITT-RACE WAMPUM, PA Featured Marque is FIAT * ENDURO * FORMULA FORD FEATURE RACE Opening Event on the Expanded Road Course to 4.1 Miles Event Chairman: Keith Lawrence, Tel: 412-770-8267 Email: keith@vrgonline.org
AUGUST 15-16	WHISKEY HILL HISTORIC RACES, Whiskey Hill Motorsports Park, Palmer, MA. Event Chairman: Mike Lawton, Tel: 978-274-5935 Email: lawton@vrgonline.org
SEPT. 18-20, 2015	NEW JERSEY HISTORIC RACES, LIGHTNING CIRCUIT, NEW JERSEY MOTORSPORTS PARK, MILLVILLE, NJ * Featured Marque is ELVA (60TH ANNIVERSARY) * Mark Donohue Cup for the best race and prepared Elva Courier * FORMULA FORD FEATURE RACE Event Chairman: Butch O'Connor, Tel: 973-295-3674 Email: bfo@spsk.com
OCT. 9-11, 2015	INAUGURAL VINTAGE EVENT AT DOMINION RACEWAY, THORNBURG, VA, A new & under construction 2 mile road course adjacent to I 95, just sourth of Fredericksburg Event Chairmen: Cal Trumbo and Jim Karamanis, Tel: 304-449-7050 Email:
NOV. 28 - 30, 2015	TURKEY BOWL XIII, SUMMIT POINT, WEST VIRGINIA Event Chairman: Michael Oritt, Tel: 305-420-4929 Email: Michael@vrgonline.org

STOLEN PORSCHE 2015

Hugging my car, I was at the tow yard after I picked up the car from being stolen

Dear: Editor

I am writing this letter to tell you about the recent events of my Vintage Racecar being stolen & recovered as I believe your readers will not only enjoy the story, but also learn from what happened to me…

A Racers Nightmare!

Recently I was traveling from Florida to West Virginia to race in the Jefferson 500. I stopped at the half way point, got a hotel room, slept briefly, & woke up to find my trailer having been broken into and the racecar **GONE**!

I come from a family of car lovers. My father was involved in the show car circuit most of my adolescent life, touring all over the country showing his Jaguars, transporting them with his truck & trailer. After my siblings & I (4) had started our own lives, he transitioned to vintage racing. It didn't take much for all of us to catch the racing bug. Soon, we all had our own cars, and became the family that races together. Needless to say, it's more than racing to us, it's a family affair!

I race with several of the Historic groups, all east coast. My car, a 2.0 Liter, silver 1968 Porsche 911 (#24)

Rather than going the route of "Arrive & Drive" and since becoming a retired businessman, I spend my time developing my car, building engines in my shop, & trailering the car to races myself. Having grown up with a father who put in thousands of miles trailering, never having had problems with theft (& I'd never heard of anyone else having any either) I thought little of the security of my trailer & racecar…*big mistake.*

My rig is a Ford F150 w/a 24' enclosed trailer. It has no stickers identifying what's inside, and simple keyed Master Locks (2) on the back drop down door, & no locks on either the trailer tongue or the actual hitch, just a cross pin w/cotter pin. This probably sounds like you right? Read on…

After having driven 8 hours, it was approaching 10:30 pm so I started thinking I'd better get a hotel room before it gets too late. I pulled off the highway in Columbia SC at an exit with lots of hotels & restaurants. I surveyed hotels for a large enough lot with available parking for a trailer, pulled in, got a room & went to bed (11pm).

The next morning I figured I'd get on the road early (another 8 hrs ahead) so I checked out at 5:30 am and as I walked out the front door (still dark) I looked at my rig and saw the trailer door DOWN! I started running across the lot and as I got close, I realized the racecar was GONE!

Devastated, what was I too do? I was in an unfamiliar area, away from anyone I knew & it was still dark out. Think to yourself, "what would you do"?

I called the police, they quickly responded. As the sunlight came up, we were able to begin to piece together what had happened. An officer dusted for fingerprints, but this only helps if the criminals have been processed in the past. It

STOLEN PORSCHE 2015, *CON'T*

appeared they tried to steal the entire trailer first (it was partially disconnected) but was too heavy to move, so they cut the locks off the drop down door only to find a shiny Porsche inside! They wasted no time using bolt cutters to snap the winch cable attached to the car, released all tie downs & rolled the car out. Then quickly emptied the trailer of my floor jack, extra race tires, & some other odds and ends from the trailer and towed the car away with a tow chain.

Right now you're probably saying, "how could no one have seen or heard this"? Well to add to this, the cheap hotel I chose magically had some "issues" with their security cameras that night and had NO video footage; surprise!

The police told me their chances of finding my vehicle were very low since it wasn't a street going car with license plates. What was I to do?

I took the following steps:
1) I walked to the neighboring businesses, told them what had happened, gave them my contact information and asked them to check their security video for anything that might help the police.
2) I wrote a long post on Facebook, adding recent photos of the car, and asked all my friends to "Share" my post on their pages & quickly it went viral! I was so amazed at the response! I was getting friend requests from people I didn't know from all over the place. I could only hope something might turn up.

At that point, feeling helpless, I got in my rig and headed back to Florida.

During the 8 hour trip home, I was watching all the "hits" on FB. One of the "Friend Request's" I received was from a gentlemen who lived in Columbia SC! He sent me his phone number and asked me to call him. I wasted no time in doing just that. After a brief introduction, he told me he worked at the local TV station and that another FB friend from Columbia contacted him and asked him to get involved. He told me the station runs a "Crime Stoppers" website and they get approx. 30,000 hits weekly & that if I'd give approval, he would pull photo's from my FB page & put a web story up and do a short piece on the 6 pm news. Of course I said yes, please, & thank you!
I got home dejected, still really in a state of disbelief that my baby was gone!

The next morning I woke up to my cell phone ringing? I answered, it was the Columbia police, announcing that they had recovered the car!! As it turns out, someone saw the story on the 6pm news and had seen the car in their development. They called into the "Crime Stoppers" hot line and made an anonymous tip. The TV station forwarded that to the police who sent cruisers to that neighborhood. They canvased the area for a while, but turned up nothing. Shortly after they left, a neighbor called the police and said, "a black Chevy Tahoe just towed a Porsche race car to the end of my street and abandoned it". They sent a cruiser back & their it was, UN-harmed!

I was very lucky to have my car returned. Don't let this happen to YOU! Here are a few takeaway's for anyone trailering:

1) Never park your trailer exposing the drop down door to an open area, always back it up against something so its contents cannot be removed
2) Spend a little extra money to buy locks specifically designed not to allow bolt cutters access. They will pay for themselves, Master Shackle Lock 6270KA ($30 ea) (look like a hockey puck)
3) Make sure you put a keyed lock on the hitch ball lock. Master Lock 37KA w/shackle guard ($13) & a "Curt 23021" ($12) truck-to-trailer hitch lock will work. The police told me they have seen thieves just pull the cross & cotter pin combo from the removable hitch and using a floor jack roll the trailer to their waiting truck & take the entire unit & its contents!!
4) Another option is to buy magnetic GPS modules, (1) for the trailer & (1) for your race car. Once mounted, God forbid you need to find either, you call cell number (pre-paid sim card) and it texts you its location. I-Track 2 GSM GPRS GPS Portable Tracker ($199 ea no monthly service req'd)
5) When you park your trailer, add a wheel chock/lock from "Trimax" ($44) with this on, no one can move your trailer.
6) The only "stickers" on your trailer should be to notify thieves of your GPS and alarm system! These are just dummy stickers, but most thieves will think twice ($4 for 2)
7) Pick your hotel location wisely. Cheaper hotels are usually in seedy areas, aren't as well lit, & many don't have security cameras (that work). A few extra $ on the room may not only get you a better nights sleep, but may save your rig & cargo.

I was very lucky to have recovered my racecar & un-damaged thanks in part to Facebook's social media. You may not be as lucky. Hindsight is always 20/20, but you can take some of the above recommendations and prevent your trailer from becoming a target for criminals!

Douglas Hagopian
1968 Porsche 911 (#24)

THE KASTNER CUP – 2015

Planning for the Kastner Cup started back in early February 2014, as the Friends of Triumph started discussing where the 2015 event should be held – it was the year to have it somewhere on the East Coast. Regulars at the Jefferson 500 suggested Summit Point, and the list got narrowed to the Jefferson and the Wild Hare Run (VIR) as the final two choices. The VRG board was enthusiastic about having Triumph as a featured marque, and we offered that we could deliver 30-35 cars, more than the usual 12-15 Triumphs that turn up for this event. We ended up with 43 Triumphs at the track, surpassing everyone's expectations.

A little background - Friends of Triumph is the vintage Triumph racers' "non-organization", linked solely by an email list and our shared love of racing Triumphs. We designate one event a year as the Kastner Cup, trying to rotate it around the country so that it's accessible to everyone. In 2014 it was in Texas, 2013 at the Elkhart Lake Vintage Festival in September (another great turn-out) and the most recent prior East Coast event was Watkins Glen in 2007. I'm going to guess there are about 100 active Triumph vintage racers nationwide, so we had nearly half of them here at the Jefferson.

The Kastner Cup is awarded by Kas Kastner himself, who was in attendance with his lovely wife Peggy for the whole weekend. Kas and Peggy live in California, so this was a long trip for them, but Kas is very actively involved in the Triumph community, still writing books on the subject of racing Triumphs, and how to prep the various models for racing. Kas awards the Cup to the car and racer who, while perhaps not the fastest car, best embodies

THE KASTNER CUP - 2015, (con't)

the spirit of Triumph racing. So who is Kas Kastner, you ask?

R. W. "Kas" Kastner was a well known production car driver in the late 1950's and class Champion of the California Sports Car Club in 1959, as well as winner of the SCCA Championship during that same year, driving a 1958 Triumph TR3A. Kas worked for Cal Sales, the west coast Triumph distributor (then independent, subsequently factory owned) by day and raced on his own time with dealership support. Kas lead the Triumph entry for Sebring 1963 from Cal Sales, winning the class with three Triumph TR4s (then the new model), finishing 1st, 2nd and 4th. The success of that effort caused Triumph to formally establish the factory competition department in the U.S., led by Kas from 1963 through 1970.

Subsequently, he formed his own company, Kastner Brophy Racing, and fielded Triumphs under contract with the Triumph factory for the next two years. One of his cars from that era, the blue and white #6 GT6, a D production car, was very competitive in the Jefferson this year. Kas is well known for his pursuit of power increases and handling improvements for the Triumph cars, with long experience in engine dynamometer testing; and the modifications he perfected still are the basis for the faster Triumphs today.

Kas, ever the competitor, also participated in sailboat racing for twenty years and was National Champion in two classes, along with many regional and divisional titles.

R.W. was the owner/manager of several companies including Arkay Inc., Kastner Brophy Racing and Roy Woods Racing. Under the flag of these companies he was the team manager of Formula 5000, Can Am and Indy car teams, and was also involved with the design, manufacturing and sale of automotive performance components - engine, suspension, turbocharger systems, brakes, and aerodynamic improvements.

He was equally successful as the Motorsports National Manager for Nissan of North America from 1986 thru 1990. Kas led the groups, which designed, built, and raced the Nissan prototype cars which dominated the International Motorsports Association (IMSA) series in the period. He led the team of Nissan Prototype cars to four consecutive Drivers Championships for Geoff Brabham and three consecutive Manufacturers championships for Nissan. The 12 hours of Sebring, 24 hours of Daytona, and 24 hours of Le Mans were all on the long schedule of events.

So, the guy has spent his life in motorsports, with many successes, and he still likes to help us with our fifty-year-old LBCs!

So, how about the Jefferson?

First, some stats- there were 43 Triumphs and a Triumph-powered Peerless registered and at the track. We had participation almost across the entire model range:

Herald – 1	TR250 - 2
Spitfire – 13	GT6 - 8
TR3 – 3	TR6- 6
TR4 – 9	TR7 - 1

The cars ran in three groups, with TR4, 250, 6 and GT6 in Group 3, the Spitfires in Group 4 with their regular competition, the Spridgets, and the three TR3s in Group 5. The highlight of the weekend was to be the Kastner Cup, the all-Triumph race scheduled for the last slot of the day on Saturday. However, that was not to be as the skies opened up about 4:15, with about an inch of rain delivered in 20 minutes. The Carousel was flooded, pit-in was under water, and wheels/tires went floating by in the low end of the paddock. Even though it stopped raining by

THE KASTNER CUP - 2015, (con't)

Photo by Bill Stoler

5 PM, there was no way the race could be run with all the standing water on the track, and it was re-scheduled for the first slot on Sunday.

We woke to grey skies and mostly dry pavement. There were 32 cars on the grid for the start of the race. A damp track, family schedules, prior incidents (one Spitfire lost) and failed mechanicals cut into the Cup turn-out but it was still a full grid. The sky started spitting just before the race, then stopped, then resumed one lap in. By lap two, turn one-two was slick and the lap time for the leader - Mike Munson in a TR6 - was down nine seconds from his best the day before, to a 1:35. By lap four, the wet conditions worsened, and led to Boyd Wagner in a TR6 dropping two wheels into the grass exiting turn eight on the uphill (a fast corner) and backing up onto the tire wall. There was only minor damage to the car and the driver was fine, but the session was black flagged while the car was pulled. Three of us, including yours truly, missed two black flags prior to pit-in and continued to race. Oops. We got to sit in the pits for the balance of the race, which resumed and ran several more laps in wet conditions, with Mike Munson finishing in first place, and Mark Wheatley in a TR4 in second. This was the first wet Cup race in thirteen years!

So, who won the Kastner Cup? It went to Mark Wheatley from New Hampshire, who pilots his TR4 to lap times beyond the capability of most TR4s, while still sporting an historic NH license plate on a car that retains its stock appearance.

For me, other than the idiot factor of blowing the black flags, the wet race almost didn't matter. This was a fantastic race weekend - we all had lots of track time - I had nine sessions on track, and that's with skipping the last race on Sunday, and not running the two enduros.

Group 3, my group, was almost all TRs - there were 31 cars, and the only non-Triumphs were a Europa, a Daimler SP250 and a fast Lotus Elan - the only car that could match Mike Munson in the TR6. So, for Group 3 it was the Kastner Cup all weekend - all the big TRs and the GT6s. Sam Halkias, normally the driver of the fastest Triumph there (he was D production champion in a different TR6 in 2009) was battling carb float and jet issues, and was generally a little off Mike's pace, though still faster than the rest of us. Other than the leaders - the Lotus, Sam, Mike and Dick Stockton in his TR4 - the next 8-10 cars were separated by a second a lap over the whole bunch, and sometimes much less. There was fantastic, competitive racing, and mostly beautiful weather other than the massive thunderstorm. Even on Sunday, it dried out an hour after the Cup, and Group 3 – the ten of us who went out - had one of the most competitive races of the weekend, with Henry Frye in the screaming yellow TR-250 trading places with Mark Wheatley's TR4 at the front a number of times.

Several Triumph racers were new to road racing at this event and went through the driver's school. Everyone acquitted themselves well throughout the weekend, gaining confidence and speed. One of these drivers, Bob Lang, deserves a special shout-out. Bob has been autocrossing his TR6 for many years in New England, and is

THE KASTNER CUP - 2015, (con't)

a consistent winner in those events but has not road raced. Both Bob and the car did extremely well – Bob was always in the top five-to-ten cars and had the fastest lap in the wet Kastner Cup. What a transition from Solo to racing side-by-side! Hopefully the hook is well set and we will see more of Bob, though it seems I won't see much of him on the track, other than the disappearing back end of his car as it pulls away.

As usual, the vintage racing spirit prevailed. When Joe Lesnowski damaged the front end of his Spitfire in an incident and was out for the weekend, he offered the use of his rear axles to Jerry Barker, who had broken one in his Herald and the replacement failed to show up by FedEx as expected. Parts were shared, clutches were replaced, problems diagnosed throughout the paddock.

Triumph racers came from as far away as Iowa, California, Canada and Florida. First-timers at the track loved it, both for the driving challenge and for the old-school feel of the place.

Socially, it was a fantastic weekend! 35+ Triumph racers were paddocked together in the grass around a big tent canopy - the others elected to scatter - and the canopy was a gathering point all weekend. Kas was based there, and we had some eye candy in the form of a couple of historic race Triumph tribute cars and two Triumph vendors with some fun shiny parts to look at. The Western Pennsylvania Triumph Association sponsored the canopy - thanks, guys! - and we had a barbecue with about 170 Triumph people under and around it Friday night. The pulled pork, brisket, cornbread, etc was amazing – next time you are at Summit you should make the quick trip down the road to Jordan Springs Market for some award-winning food. Beer was consumed (almost two kegs) and it was a great time for the racers, friends, family and Triumph street car club members to get together. Street Triumphs were all around the track most of the weekend, with a strong showing from some of the clubs in the region.

History flowed – for me, one of the prior owners of my car was there, as was a former GT6 racer who competed against my car at this track in the 1970s and knew/knows its then-owner well. I heard some great stories, and I'm sure others had similar experiences. Mike Cook, who was Triumph's advertising and public relations manager from 1958 on (ultimately performing the same task for British Leyland) was roaming the pits, as were a number of Triumph racers from back in the day. That's part of what vintage racing is all about. (the Triumph of racing over beer.-ed.)

I'm hoping the Jefferson will become a regular event on the Triumph racers' calendar!

Scott Janzen

IMSA RS & SCCA CHALLENGE "BABY GRAND"

The IMSA RS and SCCA 2.5 Challenge racing series had some of the best racing in the U.S during the 70's and early 80's. Both series were for small domestic and import sedans. The 2.5 Challenge was dominated by BRE (Brock Racing Enterprises) Datsun 510's, with John Morton winning both championships in 1971 and 1972. Alfa Romeo put up a good fight, but could not find an answer for the cars from Japan. The series was canceled after the 1972 season. John Bishop's fledgling organization IMSA (International Motor Sports Association) started to take over the road racing scene in the U.S. beginning in 1969. The RS series originally called Baby Grand started in 1971 and was an immediate success. The starting fields ranged from 12-25 cars that first year, and included Pintos, Datsuns, Gremlins, BMW's and Opels. By the mid 70's the starting fields were between 50 and 70 cars! Once the series went to all front wheel drive cars in the mid 80's the starting fields diminished tremendously, but the series continued into the 90's.

The 1971 Pinto I own was raced in the Baby Grand/RS series from 1971 to 1977 and competed in 3 2.5 Challenge races in 1972, and is also credited for having the first professional road race win for the marque (1971 IMSA race at Bridgehampton N.Y.)

This year's reunion race was once again held in conjunction with VRG's Jefferson 500 at Summit Point in May. We had 27 cars entered for the race, with 18 seeing the Green flag for the feature. The start was pretty uneventful, other than I was caught jumping the start, the powers that be, did not see the humor in that, so after letting me think I got away with it, they brought me in for a little "chat", I did a lot of listening and nodding....upon my return to the track, turn one started to look like a used car lot, with a Pinto, BMW and Alfa all parked on the outside of turn one. By the end of the 15 lap race, a few more cars were on the sidelines... John Baucom in is very fast Fiat 124 Coupe had the field covered all weekend, starting from the pole, setting fastest lap and cruising to another reunion race victory. John won last year's race, even after starting from the back of the pack. Hopefully someone will have an answer for John's Fiat at next year's race. Next year we are planning on having 2 reunion races, both with VRG, back again at Summit Point and then at the new Dominion raceway in VA in October.

Hopefully we will have a larger turnout!

Brian Walsh

NOTES FROM THE EDITOR

It is Friday afternoon, the 3rd of July. I am reviewing the finished newsletter and have the TV tuned to ESPN: the third set between Heather Watson and Serena Williams. You have heard of the Big Kahuna, the Big Bopper, well, this is the Big Newsletter. I am looking forward to our PVGP @ PIRC next week.

As with most of the activities in the VRG, all is driven by our members, and as in the Newsletter, all is driven by our contributors. Peter Krause's fine article, *A Jefferson 500 Recap*, also summarizes what VRG as a vintage race driver's club is driven by - an enthusiastic membership. We are very proud of our association with Barbara Scott and Brian Redman, which we acknowledge and who we thank.

This was the second year of *Reunion* at Thompson Speedway Motorsports Park with the VSCCA. Not as large a turnout as in 2014 but it was a successful meeting. It is a good track, a terrific facility, and again not unlike Summit Point, fine ownership and staff with whom to engage. It will find it's own level in subsequent meetings. VRG and VSCCA like having their reunions.

We enjoyed hosting the 13th Annual Kastner Cup at the Jefferson 500 this year. The IMSA RS/SCCA 2.5L Sedan Series has an extended invitation. The Formula Ford Series continues to draw a very large entry, including Earl Roberts in his Formula 3 GRD that thinks it is a Formula Ford.

I still contend that the Newsletter is mostly about the photos. We had the great photography of Walter and Louise Ann Pietrowicz when we formed the club. As they withdrew, Bill Stoler appeared to cover the events. I think that we could print a page of nonsense or expletives and very few, to no one, would notice. We are not, however, going to test you. This particular issue took more time than most. I do not have an explanation. As always, I, and the readership, are indebted to Darry Bova. Without her considerable time you would not have this Newsletter.
Thank you, Darry,

Bill Hollingsworth

P.S. On the last page we have provided a link to the Continuing Education on the VRG Website: *Here Be Dragons* - Ed Valpey's important piece on losing control of your racecar. It was printed in the last issue. Do yourself the favor and reread it each time you prepare to go to a race.

JEFFERSON 500 May 14-17 2015

Summit Point
West Virginia

View more photos @ BillStoler.com

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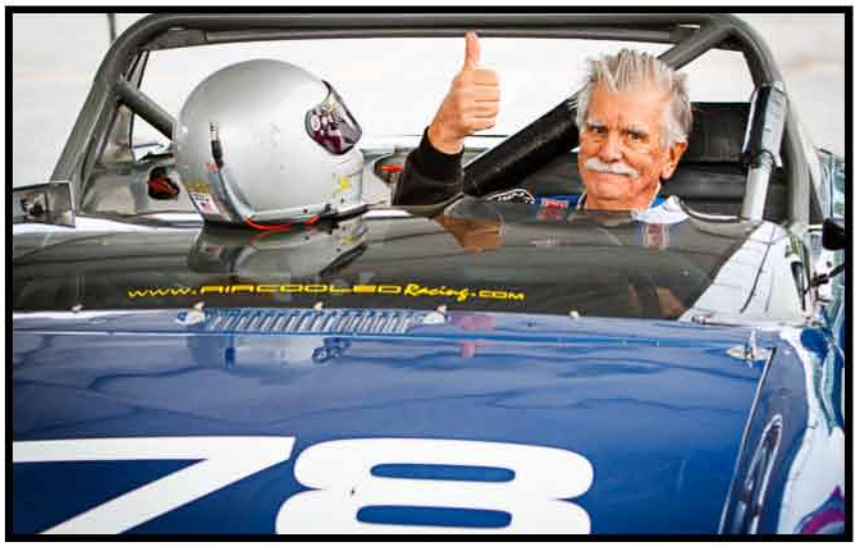
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Adolf Battle
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2015 Driving School

VRG has completed another successful driving school, providing 11 new members with provisional licenses, and 7 level two students with valuable honing of their skills.

We are proud of our school as it is one of the most comprehensive in the vintage community. Students come away with a solid grounding in the basics of car control, proper racing lines and important safety aspects of racing. They are then observed by instructors for the balance of the weekend and provided with direct and detailed feedback on their performance. A significant amount of one on one mentoring is involved, and students are encouraged to ask questions. At the conclusion of the school and the subsequent race weekend, students must attend two additional race weekends and have their performance reviewed and signed off by an instructor.

This year's school employed a different allocation of time. Students received their driving manuals in advance of the school and were instructed to read and comprehend it and bring any questions to day one of the school. This technique allowed us to minimize classroom time and maximize time spent in practice exercises.

The practical exercises include significant skid pad time concentrating on all aspects of understeer, oversteer, slip angles and recovery techniques. Skid pad time is the most valuable exercise in driver training.

A second exercise concentrates on threshold braking, braking and turning and trail braking. Students can lock their brakes in a controlled environment and learn correct techniques to avoid lock-up on track. The students are also exposed to lead follow exercises on track to observe and actually drive the proper line. Finally the class is put through a number of mock starts to experience first-hand that rush to turn one with all of its noise and potential distractions.

Our objective is to turn out students who can join a race group with confidence in their ability to perform in a safe and consistent manner as they gain experience behind the wheel. If you see a car with those two rookie stripes on the back and front, remember they have been well trained but are still on a learning curve (no pun intended) give 'em room.

Paul Bova

OUR 2015 LIST OF STUDENTS

Brown, Richard
DePol, Jay
Fontanella John
Goldfarb, Mike
Govert, Jeff
Griffith, Dan
Houvinen, Mathieu
Karol, Brad
Kramer, Steve
Kurtz, Tom
Lang, Robert
Norton, Peter
Pollock, Lisa
Shields, William
Tapolci, Jeff
Teplitz, Joe
Wagner, Boyd
Wagner, Ian

TRIUMPH
TRIUMPH
View more photos @ BillStoler.com

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41
TRIUMPH

28

MAY 13 - MAY 17, 2015
JEFFERSON
500

DATSUN

THE JEFFERSON 500 RECAP

Research for the recap of last year's epic Jefferson 500 revealed people to be so pleased, they wondered if "the Jeff" could *possibly* get any better. All they had to do was wait until THIS year to find out... Indeed, it WAS possible! The continued coordination between the co-chairs Cal Trumbo and Jim Karamanis and their EXCELLENT communication with entrants and attendees has only served to increase the confidence of both the event volunteers and Jefferson 500 attendees that all is well.

This dynamic duo›s welcoming nature and leadership make this a must-do event for both decades-long Jefferson 500 veterans and wide-eyed newbies alike. The free test day for early subscribers as well as the inclusion of the Driver's School help, of course, but Steve Hyatt and his staff, all the VRG volunteers, the tech folks, the Drivers Committee, Bill Hollingsworth and my erstwhile (and supremely patient) editor are all to be thanked for their efforts. For me, it›s always fun to do the track walk for the benefit of High Performance Heroes, having the added benefit of being able to walk off some of the calories consumed by the plentiful "social lubricants" that are present! Others obviously agreed... And I love Bill Stoler›s pictures!

In my mind, one the most successful draws of the Jefferson 500 are the multiple gatherings, the groups of like-minded enthusiasts, that seem to converge at this event. From the Vee crowd to the Formula Fords, from the B-Sedans to the Sports 2000›s and this year, a marvelous gathering of Triumphs, were all front and center for everyone to enjoy. The convivial social atmosphere spawned by our Grand Marshal, Brian Redman, in his inaugural Jefferson 500›s many years ago has not only remained strong, it has become the bedrock of the event. We›ve all seen how increasing competitiveness can lead people to make bad decisions and take away the focus on having a good time, but this event is a beacon of fun and is emblematic of how vintage racing SHOULD be. I could not help but to look up as the piercing cry of Bruce Dolan›s ex-Group 44 GT-6+ rent the air going down the front straight. Every time. Did I tell you my first ride in a sports car was in the passenger seat of one of those cars? The sound IS awesome!

On-track incidents were rare and even a freakish, prolific rainstorm could not dampen the Saturday evening festivities as the crowd was able to adapt. Overall, the feeling in the paddock was enthusiastic and friendly, the schedule ran better than in years past and under the leadership of Chris White, Summit Point continues to see vast improvements each year as Barbara Scott and her team continue to reinvest time and money in this historic track. The Jefferson 500 was born of the friendship and respect between two great racers, Brian Redman and Bill Scott, and with this year›s edition, served as a valuable tribute not only to that friendship, but to the enduring legacy of motor racing done properly!

Few people remember how important Bill Scott was in launching the careers of aspiring stateside racers forty years ago, and how successful he was as an American motor racing «refugee» in the cutthroat European formula car racing scene. Two groups of racing cars that support the Jefferson 500 are representative of Scott›s experience. Formula Vee›s, in which Scott won the 1968 European and US Championships and the 1970 World Championship, and Formula Ford, winning the 1969 World Championship, both being the central domain of Scott›s competition success. Scott also helped establish Formula Super Vee, served as an importer of cars and parts from Europe and helped field a RunOffs-winning VW Scirocco GT-3 effort in 1980 for fellow RRDC member, Tom Davey.

A brilliant man who earned a doctorate in geophysics from Yale University, he was a competitor and a leader. After purchasing the dilapidated Summit Point complex in 1980, he turned it into one of the foremost driver training facilities in the country, offering government agency and counter-terrorist driver training as well as developing programs training young drivers in accident avoidance.

THE JEFFERSON 500 RECAP (con't.)

Scott had his own explanation for success, «The competitive spirit is still there. I want to be so much better than any other business that does our type of training, so that it goes without saying that the best clients come here. Second place is not an option.» A truly accurate assessment, and one that is still timely today. Not only did Scott excel in his personal efforts, he wanted to share that knowledge and commitment in training other drivers. His commitment to driver training lives on in Ed Valpey›s superb and well-subscribed VRG Driver›s School program held immediately prior the Jefferson 500. Valpey›s program, assisted by a number of leading VRG competitors including Stefan Vapaa and Paul Bova, to name just a few, serves as the best example of how VRG invests in its members by improving their knowledge and technique, putting into practice the «culture» that is such a valuable part of VRG›s continuing legacy.

This year›s race results are available (eternally?) on Race Monitor›s servers and an ever increasing number of YouTube videos posted chronicle this year›s event (offering wonderful sights and sounds), but for me, this event and the way Cal and Jim have led it forward over the last few years make me smile for the future. And, like nearly everyone I spoke to, make me want to come back NEXT year!

Peter Krause
"Analysis and Effective Strategies Combining the Art and Science of Driving Fast!"

2ND LEG OF THE VRG RACE SERIES FOR 1968-1981 FORMULA FORDS

The Jefferson 500 weekend at Summit Point Motorsports Park was the second stop for the VRG Race Series for 1968-81 Formula Fords. By most accounts, the Triumph race for the Kas Kastner Cup drew well deserved attention as the feature race of the weekend. However, the most exciting racing of the weekend took place among a very talented group of open wheel drivers that assembled for the weekend at the popular circuit at Summit Point.

- The FF weekend kicked off on Friday night, with a Monoposto Party hosted by Graham Long and Cal Trumbo. During the party, a perpetual trophy was unveiled for the series. "The Chris Shoemaker Cup for the VRG Race Series for 1968-81 Formula Fords" is named for the promoter of the series that was started last year as the VRG/Royale Championship for FF. Accepting the trophy was last year's champion, James "Van" Van Deurzen who will keep the trophy until it is awarded at the finale later this year at the New Jersey Historics at NJMP later this year.

As I reported earlier, the opening weekend at the Wild Hare Run was a highly contested affair with both Scott Fairchild and Doug Meis capturing featuring wins during the weekend at Virginia International Raceway. Dave Fairchild and Joe Griffin also mixed it up near the front at VIR. All four of these racers returned to action at the Jeff 500, and were joined up front by Bob Bruce, Christian Morici, as well as Dennis and Leon Austin.

Friday's afternoon race featured the usual nose to tail FF/CF battle between 6 or so cars. Doug Meis and Scott Fairchild had qualified mid pack, and after a short black flag for the entire field, they started working their way to the front. Going into turn 1 on the last lap, It was anyone's race as Doug Meis, Bob Bruce, Joe Griffin and Scott Fairchild all entered turn one side by side. Somehow, they all made it through and just like VIR, Scott Fairchild and Doug Meis created another photo finish with Scott edging out Doug by less than .02 seconds!

Saturday morning's race was another close one.

2ND LEG OF THE VRG RACE SERIES FOR 1968-1981 FORMULA FORDS (cont.)

Fairchild prevailed again after going side-by-side with Bob Bruce on the last lap through turns 1-3 and completed the pass by turn four and took the win.

If you follow the VRG newsletter's you probably know that this author is the photographer who writes occasionally, as opposed to an author who takes photos. I hope the photos reflect the fact that I'm a better shooter than writer, and I forget to take notes, and sometimes I email or call the drivers to get their take on the race. In this case, I decided to finish this article with a description of the race by the racers, in their words!

This is how Scott described the action on Saturday:

Saturday's afternoon race: " *I was able to break the draft on the first lap. Unfortunately, Doug proved to be the most disciplined driver, and passed me after a few laps. We battled through the rest of the race, and lucky for me, Doug returned the favor (from a tactical error that I made at Wild Hare), and didn't see the 1 lap to go signal from the starter stand, and didn't challenge the braking into turn 1, giving me an advantage that was unable to be made back before the checkered flag. Usual "coin-flip" racing all weekend! "*

Scott indicated to me that he decided to skip Sunday's action with the threat of bad weather, and he thought that his efforts might be better spent heading home early to cut the grass!

And here is a description from the perspective of Doug Meis:
"*I was actually on pole for the Sat. AM race and lead lap 1 but was quickly demoted to 4th place. I then had the best seat in the house to watch three very talented FF pilots swap places and none made enough of a mistake to give me a passing opportunity so I finished in 4th." "The Sat. PM race was the one I should have won. I had to get serious and run a couple of really good laps to back into Scott's tow. Late in the race I set up a perfect draft pass into T1 but failed to see the "one lap to go" sign and didn't push the issue when Scott went pretty deep on the brakes. When I saw the checker at the end of the lap, I knew why he gave a little resistance!"*

The Formula Ford Feature race scheduled for 4:45 was cancelled due to a West Virginia "frog swallower" of a storm that hit the track mid-afternoon. It's hard to imagine what kind of racing "may have been!" The Saturday Afternoon race win by Fairchild would be considered the feature win for the FF Series.
Sunday's race was would be captured by Leon Hodges Austin in his Dad's Zink. Joining the battle in the race was Doug Meis and Joe Griffin as well as the 1969 Lotus 51-C of William Bartlett.

Here's a description of the race from Doug Meis' perspective:
"*Sunday was pretty interesting. With Scott, Bob and Christian bailing out, I thought it was going to be between me and Joe off & on rain leading up to the start kept me guessing on roll bar, shock and tire pressure settings. It looked like it would be dry and I rolled to the grid with mostly dry settings. Then it rained while we waited on the grid but stopped before we went out. The first few laps were cautious but the track dried quickly and we were running our dry lap times. As the race progressed, Joe and I had our hands full as Leon Hodges-Austin was right in the thick of it in his father's (Dennis Austin) Zink. Leon survived a HUGE tank-slapper coming out of T4 and braking for T5 - save of the weekend. We had a very light rain later in the race and mostly in T1 just to keep us on our toes but Leon held off Joe to take the FF win."*

A BIG THANK YOU to Scott and Doug for the help with this story, and I regret that Doug Meis won't be at Pitt-Race to continue those string of "photo finishes" with Scott Fairchild. But we look forward to seeing a few others challenging for Mr. Fairchild for that coveted "The Chris Shoemaker Cup for VRG Race Series for the 1968-81 Formula Fords!

Bill Stoler
(a worthy author and great photographer – ed.)

MAY 13 - MAY 17, 2015
JEFFERSON
500

45

116

BELL

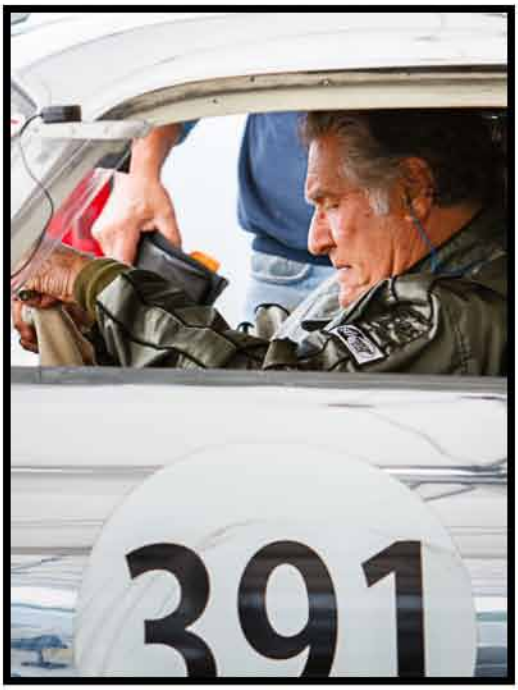
View more photos @ BillStoler.com
166
DATSUN

View more photos @ BillStoler.com

TOYO

Bob Bruce
CF

RACE
PRTS YARD
SALE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View more photos @ BillStoler.com

IMSA RS & SCCA CHALLENGE "BABY GRAND"

The IMSA RS and SCCA 2.5 Challenge racing series had some of the best racing in the U.S during the 70's and early 80's. Both series were for small domestic and import sedans. The 2.5 Challenge was dominated by BRE (Brock Racing Enterprises) Datsun 510's, with John Morton winning both championships in 1971 and 1972. Alfa Romeo put up a good fight, but could not find an answer for the cars from Japan. The series was canceled after the 1972 season. John Bishop's fledgling organization IMSA (International Motor Sports Association) started to take over the road racing scene in the U.S. beginning in 1969. The RS series originally called Baby Grand started in 1971 and was an immediate success. The starting fields ranged from 12-25 cars that first year, and included Pintos, Datsuns, Gremlins, BMW's and Opels. By the mid 70's the starting fields were between 50 and 70 cars! Once the series went to all front wheel drive cars in the mid 80's the starting fields diminished tremendously, but the series continued into the 90's.

The 1971 Pinto I own was raced in the Baby Grand/RS series from 1971 to 1977 and competed in 3 2.5 Challenge races in 1972, and is also credited for having the first professional road race win for the marque (1971 IMSA race at Bridgehampton N.Y.)

This year's reunion race was once again held in conjunction with VRG's Jefferson 500 at Summit Point in May. We had 27 cars entered for the race, with 18 seeing the Green flag for the feature. The start was pretty uneventful, other than I was caught jumping the start, the powers that be, did not see the humor in that, so after letting me think I got away with it, they brought me in for a little "chat", I did a lot of listening and nodding....upon my return to the track, turn one started to look like a used car lot, with a Pinto, BMW and Alfa all parked on the outside of turn one. By the end of the 15 lap race, a few more cars were on the sidelines... John Baucom in is very fast Fiat 124 Coupe had the field covered all weekend, starting from the pole, setting fastest lap and cruising to another reunion race victory. John won last year's race, even after starting from the back of the pack. Hopefully someone will have an answer for John's Fiat at next year's race. Next year we are planning on having 2 reunion races, both with VRG, back again at Summit Point and then at the new Dominion raceway in VA in October.

Hopefully we will have a larger turnout!

Brian Walsh

THOUGHTS FROM THE SHOWER

We are traveling. This morning I awoke from a very sound sleep after flying to London,over night, with no sleep, to have a quiet day with our hosts. I thought I would fall asleep during dinner. I did not, but did fall asleep as my head scrunched into a soft pillow on the bed. I was greeted at breakfast with my host and iPad with Olga Reindlova›s piece, another installment of «The Girls Racing With the Guys.» I am remembering the words from the song in «Gigi,» «I Remember it Well,» it warms my heart to have one of the girls beat all of the boys. We have had a few pieces in the Newsletter from our women drivers, and after the recent death of Denise McCluggage, I felt the need to take more advantage of their presence in VRG, to honor their contribution, to what for the most part, is a boy›s game. In one of VRG›s first elections Mari Ryan was elected to the BOD. She made substantial contributions. We regretted her not continuing - her career as a sole provider demanded her full attention. We continue to miss her contribution, and her presence.

Ah yes, in my Sunningdale shower this morning, following my British breakfast, I was thinking about our pack of boys, doing what they do at a VRG race meeting, and how «unsexist» is their behavior. We have an age cutoff for race cars, 1979, and rules for their eligibility, but we have very few requirements for the members. Age, male or female, color, religion, political affiliation, income, social standing - not listed eligibility requirements. It is understood that they be of good character. VRG is more about it›s members than it is about it›s member›s cars. You are my crowd and I am proud to be a member with the «rest of the guys and dolls.»

Bill Hollingsworth

THE GIRLS RACING WITH THE BOYS

It was nice being back at Summit Point with VRG. The rain hurt us a bit, but not much. It was fun seeing grown men barefoot, shirtless, running through the mass of rain and floods securing their precious toys and their flying awnings.

We (my significant other /sponsor Herb Wetanson and I) started our weekend early with practice on Thursday. Our memories of racing at Summit Point are bountiful as we go back some 20 years or more, when SVRA had their North and South Challenge and when our favorite Brian Redman ran the Jefferson 500 event.

So...to go to Summit Point concession for a pit stop morning coffee and to see the same lovely, warm, beautiful ladies behind the counters brought some reminiscing as they have been there since we started going to Summit Point back in Bill Scott's days.

VRG events are always very friendly and human. Great camaraderie and energy throughout the paddock. Even the early morning drivers' meeting has bit of humor.....a great start to the weekend.

Terrific drivers turned out and there was much competition between beautiful cars.....

I brought my favorite Porsche 911 to give my fellow (mostly male) drivers some female competition. I worked very hard as the pressure was tough. There is no such a thing as ladies first .....BUT- with my so very special teacher Peter Krauss by my side, I improved my timing and was looking forward to the all Porsche race on Saturday. The weather was perfect for the first three days and our practice/ qualifying was pretty much smooth going.

I was gridded second in the Eifel Trophy Porsche Feature race behind John Deford in his Porsche 914-6. As always my stomach was churning and I was very nervous. Some positive encouragement from Herb, dear friend Dennis and also Andy, our forever support from KTR , was a big help. However, once the green flag is out all is forgotten. I had a great start, great passing with my fellow drivers and a superb ending with me winning the race.

I couldn't be happier as John Deford was right behind me, followed by John Coey in his Porsche 911 and could have passed me if there were more laps to go.

(Maybe :-)

It was a great ending to my weekend as the rain came down late Saturday and continued through Sunday.

I'm looking forward to my next visit at Summit Point with VRG as they put together a superb weekend!

Thank you Cal Trumbo, Jim Karamanis our Grand Marshal Brian Redman and to all volunteers who make this event possible.

And of course to all my fellow participants.

See you next time,

Olga

VINTAGE MOTORSPORTS FESTIVAL AT THOMPSON SPEEDWAY MOTORSPORTS PARK 2015

VRG Group 1

Bill called the other day and asked if I would write something for the newsletter - so here it goes. First, for those who don't know me, I'm reasonably new to vintage racing. I started two years ago with an MGB that had been raced in Colorado. It was described as "race ready," more or less. It turned out to be less. I was at last year's event (me and my MGB), having engine problems the entire time. After spending the 2014 season going from bad to worse, I had Mike Kusch build me a fresh engine. It is now "race ready," and I am, as might be said, "off to the races."

Last year there was a great turnout but this year, I'm sorry to say, it was a sad turnout. You guys & gals missed some really good racing with perfect weather Friday & Saturday. The Saturday evening Dinner with author/ speaker Burt Levy, was the perfect ending to a day of great racing. Sunday was canceled due to the weather and the fact that almost everyone was leaving for Father's Day at home with their families, and there is no racing in the morning on Sunday - I'm sure that influenced most everyone's decision to leave. Rumor has it that the date may be moved back a week so as not to conflict with Father's Day, Mosport, and have the event end Saturday, concluding with the excellent banquet.

There was some good racing in Group 1, where we had the dueling Hagopians, grandson Matt in his Bug Eye Sprite managed to beat out grandpa Gary in his MG Midget. Drew Cullen with his Elva and Kevin Gosselin with his Triumph Spitfire were right in the mix with the dueling Hagopians. John Faulkner in his MGA, Michael Oritt in his Ginetta G4, Kent Bain in his Triumph Spitfire, Nial McCabe in his MG Midget and David Reid's Austin Mini Cooper were also running in the pack until they had car trouble or had to leave for other reasons (they might have stopped for an ice cream – ed.). Me and my MGB, Richard Brown in his Bug Eye Sprite and Michael Richmond in another Bug Eye Sprite were having a good racing. Nicholas Polomeni in his Volvo 544, Jerry Smith in his Devin C and John Travers in his MG Mark IV were "hanging in there." It was good racing, a good time, and a terrific weekend.

Ken Haas

VRG Group 3 Formula Ford

I recently had the pleasure of attending the vintage festival at Thompson Speedway with the VRG and VSCCA. It was great seeing some friends from the VSCCA who I only get to see at this event. The event was well organized and I honestly could not have had more fun. The track staff and event chairs did a amazing job. The track staff were also asking constantly how to improve the event. I can't say that I see that at most tracks. The dinner was excellent and the entertainment provided by Burt Levy was hysterical. There are also many lake front cottages nearby, so it is great if you want to bring the family and go for a dip after a hard day of racing.

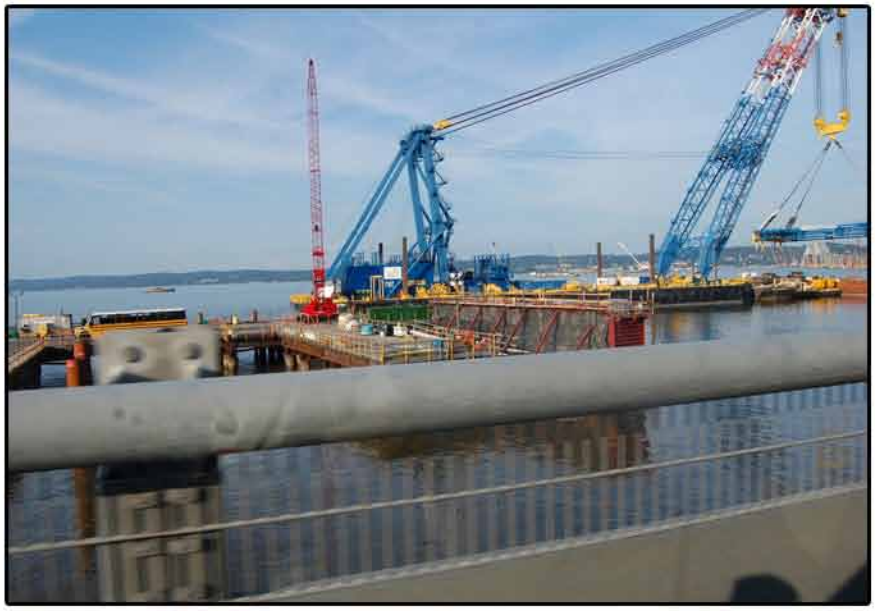
Now for the reason we all race is the track. Well…, there are a few types of tracks out there. Some people enjoy historic tracks, others like the prestige of a specific event like your Monterey Historic's or your Indy"s. I try not to get wrapped up in that though. Thompson is a true driver's track. It is very technical with plenty of off camber turns, elevation changes and blind corners. It is hands down my favorite track on our calendar. I highly recommend taking part in the test day if you have not run here before. You will need the extra time to learn the track and to sharpen your skills. It will also put you ahead of most of your group when it comes to qualifying and to your races. I am not going to lie, it is quite a physical and mental work out getting around this course, but once you get the hang of it, you will be hooked. So if you are looking for a challenge and would like to truly test your skills I would highly recommend coming next year. And, if anyone would like a run-down of how I drive the track please feel free to stop by the Morici trailer and have a chat with me, I would love to help you out.

Smiling ear to ear,
Christian Morici

THOMPSON SPEEDWAY 2015

Photo's by Nial McCabe

Photo's by Nial McCabe



One of the world's largest floating cranes.....spotted at the Tappan Zee Bridge on the way home

VRG Group 4

I was looking forward to returning to Thompson Speedway for the 2nd annual Vintage Motorsports Festival for two reasons. First, to re-connect with many friends after the long, harsh winter and second, to continue my "learning process" of this historic track and its diversity of turns and segments. I was not disappointed.

Upon arrival on Thursday, I was pleased to find several facility improvements that had taken place since the last visit including the new drivers' lounge and free wi-fi which served to keep my "pit crew" occupied during down times. I was also excited to learn that the Group 4 cars were going to be combined with the Group 2 cars which meant I would be sharing the track with friends that I don't often get the opportunity to race with.

As with last year, the facility was top-notch and the coordination between VSCCA and VRG along with the effort of all the workers made for a well-run and enjoyable event with an abundance of track time.

Friday morning's practice revealed 18 cars in our "expanded" group. For the most part, the track was as I had remembered it with a few new "bumps" and those same slow speed corners that will "scold" you for trying too hard (turn 4). Things seemed to be moving along fairly smoothly until a late session incident in turn 4 that brought out the red flag followed by a session ending black flag. Good to hear later that everyone was okay.

Friday afternoon's qualifying race started with the #49 Corvette on pole next to Damon Josz's Porsche 911 followed by Frank Grimaldi's Old #80 Camaro and Mark Gunsales's Mustang GT350 on his return to racing after a multi- year hiatus. I enjoyed a good dice with Grimaldi and then with Josz who managed to occupy just about every inch of my mirrors with his 911. And, after getting back by Grimaldi watched Josz, Grimaldi and then Mike Dube's stock car all fighting in the mirror.

For Saturday morning's race, there was a slight change in the starting lineup up front with the #49 Corvette and Mike Dube's stock car now in the front row with Grimaldi and Josz in the second row. This time, Grimaldi "ran away" at the start and I spent most of the race trying to get around Dube until he pulled off with only a few laps left. Despite reeling Grimaldi back in, we finished nose to tail. From what I could see, there were also several other great battles happening between various cars in the group with a few "3 wide" moments adding to the excitement.

Saturday afternoon's race was more of the same. I had a front row seat to watch Dube and Grimaldi duke it out early until we both got by and then spent the rest of the race trying to find a way around Grimaldi (who seems to have knack for putting his car EXACTLY where I want to go!) and staying ahead of Dube who could "pounce" at any moment. Again, lots of other great action between several of the cars in the group.

With the event being cut short due to the imminent threat of torrential rain, all that was left on Sunday morning was to pack up and head for home. All in all, another great race weekend and looking forward to returning next year.

Chris Homer

VSCCA Thompson Group 2

The 2015 Thompson Speedway Motorsports Park Vintage Festival was held June 19-20. Unfortunately, the turnout was about half of last year's, possibly due to a conflict with Mosport. However, those that did race did not disappoint. Paul Glynn led the group with a blistering time of 1:31.423. Steve Lenrman squeezed in between Paul and Richard. First year racer Richard Brown, did an admirable job placing third with a well prepared car thanks to Wally Hicks. He kept himself busy racing in both the VSCCA and the VRG groups.

There was a tight group of 5 cars racing in the 1:37's which is where I found myself despite several challengesI had a fresh engine and new radiator in addition to new front spindles. I missed out on the first session due to overheating. I solved that problem with a lower pressure radiator cap. Then session two was fine until coming out of turn one the engine started cutting out and I was forced to jump start the engine each lap. We solved that by repairing the bad wiring on the ignition. All along the engine started to blow out a quart of oil each session on my feet and the side of the car. We tightened up oil lines and changed the prefilter, however, this problem remains to be solved

Unfortunately the Sunday race schedule was cancelled due to heavy rain. (The readership will notice the photos of Dan Leonard working on his car. Some weekends are better than others. Dan is a great competitor and supporter of MGVR and VSCCA - ed.)

The Thompson track management went out of their way to make our stay enjoyable. The addition of the drivers lounge complete with hot coffee, drinks and snacks was appreciated by all.

Next year I hope to figure out the clubhouse turn 4... I haven't got it yet!!!!

Dan Leonard 1953 Lotus VI #409

THOMPSON SPEEDWAY MOTORSPORTS PARK 2015

Photo's by Mark Sherman

THE GIRLS RACING WITH THE BOYS
Thompson

After reading several of the other women's stories on racing, I've noticed a common thread in these articles: family. My story follows along this line as well, as vintage racing has always been and always will be tied to my father, Greg Prehodka, and the experiences and memories associated with race weekends with him throughout my life.

My memories of racing go back as far as I can remember. One of my earliest memories is of a weekend at the Lime Rock Vintage Fall Festival when my dad bought me a small, battery powered, model of the #4 Kodak sponsored NASCAR vehicle. I loved this car, and thought it was the greatest thing to be able to zip around Lime Rock in my own racecar, and I was not alone. I was racing with the boys from the beginning as an ESPN camera man chased me around the paddock! He ran behind me as I zipped around the racing school area grabbing a few shots for opening footage to use in ESPN's coverage of the weekend.

Needless to say I was hooked, and as I got older the Kodak car no longer cut it! I was eager to be involved wherever possible, and depending on my age that took different forms. From a young age I wanted to work on the car, which my dad patiently encouraged, although I'm sure he could have completed the work much faster without a 5 or 6 year old interfering. For race weekends I took great pride in my role setting-up camp, grilling food, working on the car, staffing MGVR info tents; and once I was old enough, helping with the driving to and from events. Additionally, I loved camping at the track and waking up to the sounds of engines, and I despised the brightly colored wrist band that prohibited me (until I was over 18) from entering the hot pits. And… the highlight of every weekend was always a ride around the track, or the paddock, next to my dad in the MGTD. In those moments I always felt as if I was the luckiest person in the world.

As soon as my 18th birthday rolled around, I was ready to occupy the driver's seat, and fortunately my dad obliged, as he had to vacate the seat himself in order for me to race. At this point, 'ol 53 (as my dad affectionately refers to the car) was no longer anywhere near the fastest on the track, but I still managed to find a few cars out there who I could race with, and occasionally get myself into some trouble. (Greg Prehodka is the founder of MG Vintage Racers, a newsletter, which in the 1980's was formed to "band to together" the community of MG owners who raced T Series MG's. The newsletter expanded to include MGA's, then all, and it is all due to his dedication, and enthusiasm. Greg is a "Historical Figure" in the vintage racing community – ed.)

While I am often one of only a couple women (if not the only one) at vintage race events, not to mention the youngest, the vintage racing community, and all the "boys" that entails, has become a sort of family to me. Whether it was playing with their children (or dogs), eating their food, or now chats about the track, car and race, the other vintage racers have always made me feel at home.

Rachel Prehodka

Photo's by Mark Sherman

2nd Leg of the Formula Jr Historics
North America
Thompson Speedway, June 19-15

It is a beautiful Thursday evening and I arrived at this historic racetrack in the northeast corner of Connecticut. This is the closest track and therefore the shortest drive for me. I go into the registration office and meet Michael Virr, VSCCA, and Paul Bova, and Paul King, VRG, event chairmen, and they help me sign up for the weekend. There is excitement in the air; perhaps because it's the first FJHNA race in the northeast this year. I get my information pack and low and behold a surprise; the 2015 race poster featuring Formula Junior as the featured race and a Lotus 18 splashed in the center. After Bob Goeldner's arrival, we went to enjoy a fine dinner at a local restaurant. Formula Junior drivers are arriving this evening from California, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York, Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts and Connecticut.

Friday morning, shiny Formula Junior race cars have assembled on the grid, ready for warm up races. Some of the drivers had signed up for Thursdays track day. Talking to Larry McKenna, he told me that he had already done thirty laps and with another thirty laps today, he would be truly ready for the race on Saturday. In the first warm up race, Bob Goeldner in his Brabham BT2 lead, showing us all the way around the track. Bob Mirabile in his newly refurbished Cooper T59 gave Bob and the BT2 a run for his money. Bill Gelles's and Larry McKenna's Stanguelini look great and are the fastest front engine cars. Steve Morici had driven for three days/nights from California and his fatigue showed the first day. However, Steve and his Cooper did not show any fatigue on the track this morning. Sadly, a number of drivers, including Joseph DeLucia in the Lotus 18 started to loose their cars with problems early in the weekend. Thanks to Sharyon Goeldner, the day ended up at the FJHNA dinner at Bella's Bistro in Putnam, where lots of stories were spun and none of the cars.

The Saturday race was a close race as Formula Junior races often are. McKenna in the Stanguelini came in first in the Front Engine group. Nick Grewal was first in the Rear Engine Drum Brake group and Bob Mirabile was first in the Rear Engine Disc Brake group. After seeing most drivers spin, I remember from last year that Thompson is a technical track. Perhaps, it was most drivers just having fun weekend being out in their Formula Junior cars for the first time this year.

Thank you VRG, VSCCA, Thompson and all the Volunteers! Another fun filled, incident free Formula Junior race was in the history books.

Nick Grewal

Thompson 2015

photo's by Mark Sherman

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WHO IS MURRAY SMITH?

So why do people decide to leave their grills cold in the backyard and drive to Lime Rock for the Historics on Labor Day weekend?

I admit I took a lot for granted and assumed that the opportunity to see great cars and famous people just sort of happened. After speaking with Event Chairman Murray Smith, I have a new appreciation for the work behind the scenes—how important it is to think big and deliver that dream. If you don't know, Mr. Smith was responsible for the Louis Vuitton Classic at Rockefeller Center, bringing together the finest automobiles in the world at a venue he described as, "Something other than a golf course," where concours events usually take place. He thinks big. Those of us who have come to love the Historics are justified in expecting a lot this year because this man is using his wealth of experience and knowledge about cars to draw us from near and far.

"We have to provide more than just a bunch of guys running old cars," he told me during a visit to his home in Litchfield County on a beautiful spring day.

Born in Scotland and still a world traveler, Mr. Smith has a unique vantage point, able to see the car world as it exists all over the world.

"Vintage racing means something different in America." He explained the term was used to describe cars from 1930 or earlier in Europe but here is often used to refer to a wider range of vehicles, including those from the 60s and 70s.

Given the wider variety of cars that run in historic races here, spectators don't necessarily expect to see rare cars. Also, there is an attitude among many American collectors to protect the cars as financial investments rather than test them on a track as their engineers originally intended.

Addressing the challenge of funding an event as big as the Lime Rock Historics, Mr. Smith is not focusing as much on sponsorship and would prefer not to burden drivers with large entry fees. His idea is to create an event that will appeal to spectators. Many, many spectators.

"I subscribe to what the VRG is doing, dedicated to having real cars on the track and the driving behavior that safeguards drivers and the future of the cars themselves."

He added, "The important thing is to give spectators something really extraordinary in addition to the old cars."

Last year, a visit from Sir Stirling Moss and Lime Rock's unique devotion to giving its visitors an all-access experience combined to give Historics participants the chance to rub shoulders with their hero.

"His talent is beyond belief and people want to see that sort of thing. He's a legend."

Mr. Smith is working hard at expanding that experience for the 2015 event, hinting that some very interesting drivers will be attending.

His long history with cars began when he was 10, when he wrote an article for the school newsletter describing his father's friend, Prince Birabongse Bhanudej Bhanubandh (or Prince Bira as the young man knew him), the only Formula One driver from Thailand.

Shortly after the article was published, Mr. Smith found himself called to the head master's office, where he was asked, "Do you want to go to a motor race?"

WHO IS MURRAY SMITH?

This was a new opportunity as his father's game was golf. The young man agreed and, a short while later, an old Rolls Royce station wagon carried him to Silverstone.

"There was an incredible noise. David Murray was in his Maserati and that hooked me."

He began a new practice of waiting for the latest editions of car magazines at a shop near his mother's house and next to a factory. That factory produced Fraser Nash automobiles.

"A guy came out in a shop coat and looked at my magazine. He said I could come into the factory and look around but told me not to speak to the men. If I had any questions, I could go to his office and ask him."

He thoroughly enjoyed that privilege and, when he went off to university, took a job testing and selling cars on weekends. "That paid for my old cars and I got to know more people."

Mr. Smith started racing in 1956. He was later able to race in Greece while working there for an advertising agency. "I won the Greek Hill Climb Championship and participated in five Acropolis rallys. When I returned to Europe, I continued racing there but never had the time, money, or dedication to do full on racing."

However, he stayed very much connected to the sport and the line between his passion for his hobby and his career often blurred as he was able to introduce his clients to members of the racing community.

"I gradually got involved in the old car scene as well as modern. I sold ideas to people who bought old cars, advised enthusiasts on the best car to buy."

He was instrumental in showing Chrysler, Ford, and Rolex how to extend their promotions to enthusiasts who would be customers. Today, he works for Rolex on a worldwide basis in motorsport.

"I was only 17 or 18 when I was able to meet my hero Stirling Moss in the pits at Silverstone. Now we're pals and he stays here when he's in town."

Mr. Smith is frequently invited to interview many of these driving legends at worldwide racing events but the man downplays his own driving talents, "I'm no great shakes as a race car driver. I don't have the credibility of winning big events but I've been there and understand that world more or less. I may not equal the guys I interview but I'm not talking off of the top of my head."

He credits his enviable lifestyle to luck and an ability to deliver. "I do it because I love it."

The boy who would wait for new magazines to be available for sale grew to be a man who has copies of every issue of his favorite periodicals. When he opened one of the bound volumes, I got the sense that he knows those pages well. Trophies from his own races, the Louis Vuitton Classic, and many more events are on display as are the plaques given to each driver who finishes the Monte Carlo Rallye, a collection that dates from the first race in 1911.

"They make an extra one each year for me, to add to the collection," he noted.

He is well versed in the subject of cars, not only familiar with marques but specific cars. His book, "The Alphabet and the Automobile," is a great summary of that vast knowledge and a delight for any car enthusiast. That's a trite phrase but, honestly, I felt delighted when I read that book, especially lucky because I could hear Mr. Smith's voice as I read the words. He's got quite the turn of phrase but more than that he radiates that internal spark so many of us feel when we visit our first track and "get the bug."

For sure, my grill will be ice cold when I go to see what Mr. Smith has in store for us at the next Historics.

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Please reread Ed Valphey's article on the VRG website.

HTTP://WWW.VRGONLINE.ORG

Then click on CONTINUING EDUCATION, the last article is called HERE BE DRAGONS. Is is an important piece on losing control of your racecar. It was printed in the last issue. Do yourself the favor and re-read it each time you prepare to go to a race.

For the driver who enjoys racing with others who value driver attitude, skill and car preparation.

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PITT - RACE July 10 - 132

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!