

SPITFIRE

3
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Winter 2000

magazine

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Brand New
Spitfire?

Clear View on
the World

Slave Cylinder
Replacement





You'd act sassy, too...if your name was Spitfire.

 You can't blame a Spitfire for feeling exuberant. It simply outclasses everything in its price league.

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And nothing, but nothing looks like the Spitfire... except maybe that plane.

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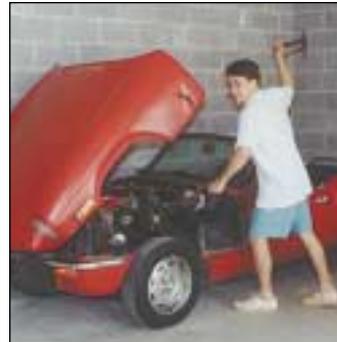
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from the editor



When our company decided to do this magazine the staff agreed that the Spitfire and GT6 were two of the most under rated and under appreciated sports cars in the world. *If* they are seen in other magazines, they are often treated like the stepchild to the other Triumph models. I think the

primary reason for this is the Spitfire's best and worst asset; its low cost. Some people equate low-cost with low-value. Mk1's and Mk2's are getting scarce because so many "threw away" an ailing car. Today's Mazda Miata MX5 was designed to fill a void that the Spitfire once held; the "biggest bang for the lowest buck". I can't imagine that in 35 years the Miata will be looked down upon by the other Mazda owners. On the other hand, the Spitfire's low price was admittedly one of the main reasons I chose it as my first sports car. In the US, a decent Spit could be had for \$1000-\$2000. If you are lucky enough to get one that has been taken care of or you don't have the compulsive need to have a showroom car, there is no better sports car. I have always felt Spitfires beat the other cars in its class, like the MG Midget, in many respects. Nicer interior, sexy body and accessibility to the engine are just a few of the many reasons.

Because so many Spitfires and GT6's were discarded, another negative becomes a positive; their scarcity. I almost never come across another Spitfire on the road. When I do, I always get a wave from the other driver. In parking lots, I often see passing fathers pointing out the car to their sons as a car they once owned in their youth. There is no better pride than heritage.

The Spitfire/GT6 magazine is our attempt at glorify and keep the cars alive. We want the magazine to grow and get more informative every issue. A journey of a thousand miles begins with one step. We love our cars but are by no means "experts". We want you to feel as if this magazine along with our accompanying website (TriumphSpitfire.com) is yours to share any information you feel would be of value to other Spitfire and GT6 owners. With your help, we will keep the glory alive and raise the Spitfire and GT6 to the level it deserves.

Thanks and looking forward to hearing from you,

John Goethert
editor

Spitfire & GT6 magazine

Spitfire

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Magazine
Publisher
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The staff of Spitfire/GT6 Magazine expresses its sincere gratitude to the many supporters and suppliers of stories, photos and technical information.

Spitfire/GT6 Magazine is published quarterly at a rate of \$9.95 US, \$14.95 other North America and \$19.95 Europe. To subscribe, call 1-800-487-3333 or write Spitfire Magazine,

P.O. Box 30806, Knoxville, TN 37930-0806
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- 75-80 Spitfire 1500 Official Repair Operation Manual** 216 pgs. \$ 37.84
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- Restoration: Practical Classics & Car Restorer** on Triumph Spitfire Restoration. 80 pages \$ 11.84
- Mk3 Parts Manual Factory Official** 224 pages \$ 37.84
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- Competition Preparation Manual** by Triumph for all Spitfires MK1-1500; 64 pgs. \$ 10.95
- Mk1-3 Official Workshop Manual**, 272 pages incl Herald & Vitesse. \$ 37.84
- Purchase & Restoration Guide**, Spitfire, GT6, Herald, & Vitesse, by Lindsay Porter & Peter Williams, Hardcover, 312 pg, 961 ill. \$ 24.85
- Mk4 Parts List** for Triumph Spitfire \$ 7.95
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- 62-74 GT6 & Vitesse Haynes Manual** \$ 29.84
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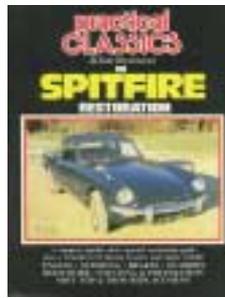


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Book Review



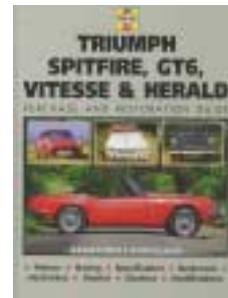
Spitfire Restoration: Practical Classics & Car Restorer
 By Brooklands Books, 80 pages, \$13, £8

This book is basically a compilation of reprints of Practical Classics stories originally run Feb. 1981-87. The book starts out with general buying guides for both Spitfire and GT6. The next few stories deal with repair and rebuilds of common problems dealing with both cars; sill replacements, suspension & steering rebuild, and engine strips. The last 14 chapters deal exclusively with the Spitfire. The stories are written in diary format discussing the problems involved in a refurb of a Triumph Sports Six Club member's 1970 Mk 3. Some of the restorations covered are: differential replacement, gearbox repair, body removal, chassis repair, painting, cockpit re-trim and hood replacement. Because the book is written while doing an actual repair, the stories tell in detail of real-life problems that arise, not the generic style of a shop manual. There are often tips sprinkled through out.

If there are any negatives, I would say one would be the quality of the black & white photos. Being reprints, the fine details are often lost. However never bad enough as to make them unusable. Occasionally there are hand-drawn diagrams used to show aspects of assembly that would not be able to be seen in a photograph.

Another minus could be that the book doesn't deal with common problems of all Spitfires, just the problems they found on this specific Spitfire. The problems that are addressed however, are discussed well.

Although this book does not have the large amount of information of the next book to be reviewed, it is relatively inexpensive and would make a welcome addition to an enthusiast's automotive library.



Spitfire, GT6, Herald, & Vitesse Purchase & Restoration Guide. By Lindsay Porter & Peter Williams, 312 pg, 961 ill. \$35, £18

This hard-bound book by Haynes Publishing contains 7 chapters dealing with every aspect of Spitfire & GT6 restoration and troubleshooting. The chapters are: Heritage, Buying, Bodywork, Mechanical components, Electrical components, Trim (exterior and interior) and Home modifications. This book has it all! Too much to list but here is a brief overview.

The book begins with a brief history including models that lead up to the Spitfire/GT6. It even features information on racing and Spit/GT6 derived cars.

Chapter 2 deals with choosing a car and the potential problems to look for when buying. It discusses problems associated with specific models and popular options to look for when buying.

The body work chapter (chapter 3) discusses with almost every common major repair Spit/GT6 cars; floor pan, door skin, sill replacement, etc. Most being rust repair, however, there is information dealing with the painting after the repairs.

Chapters 4 and 5 deal with mechanical and electrical components respectively. They deal with all the usual ailments however they discuss such surprising topics as engine removal without a hoist and transmission removal without removing the engine.

The most surprising chapter is chapter 7. It discusses aftermarket items for the Spit/GT6 delving into such additions as electronic ignition and electric fan fitting.

If there are any negatives (I had to search hard) they would be that it would be nice if the "spotters guide" section were in color not black and white. Also, there is a lot of information about the Herald. While it is interesting, it doesn't necessarily pertain to me being a Spitfire owner. Remember, I am trying very hard to find something negative with this wonderful book.

This book is well worth the \$35/£18. Loaded with loads of useful troubleshooting and step by step instructions, this book is a must have.

**MODERN MATH:
1+1+1=1**

I am just letting you know what I have done, and I am by no means a expert. Just another shadetree wrench jockey. Just because like so many other LBC owners, I do what I have to do it myself because there never seems to be anyone or anywhere that seems reputable or capable or most of all willing to work on our babies.

I am sure that you have walked into an "Import Auto Repair" garage and all they want to work on is MB, Volvos, BMWs, Porches or Japanese cars. They all but laugh out loud when you ask, "Do you work on Triumphs?". So we all become experienced from necessity instead of because we just have nothing better to do with our time. But it is satisfying to take a 1400lb. pile of scrap metal and make it a viable vehicle.

I bought my 64 Spitfire for \$300 back in 1979, from a kid who had been rearended by his best friend. The front clip was pretty well beat up, the interior was in the guy's basement, the tranny was sitting where the passenger seat was supposed to be and had been sitting for about 2 years. The trunk was 2 bent fenders and a bent deck lid, there was no floor in the trunk just some shards of rusty metal where it used to be.

In '81 I found a '63 Spit that had been left at a shop for repairs and the owner had failed to pay the bill and I paid

\$125 for #2 (parts car). I retrieved the "front" bonnet, rear deck lid and gauges (this one suffered trunk rot also).

In '86 I found a wrecked '67 Mk3 part car #2 (and #3 triumph). From this one I got a complete rear body clip less the deck lid and lights. After bartering with a guy who had a body shop and owned a Mark 2 with a blown engine. I traded #2 spit that had a 1500 engine for all the body work and a decent paint job (I supplied the materials and he did the work). So, I have a complete car.

I guess my next venture will be to overhaul my SUs and fit a new distributor, after I locate my wiring problem. Until then, Peace be with you.

Larry Zink 64 Mk1

**ON THE SEVENTH DAY
GOD CREATED BONDO**

You need to clearly understand the car is a hobby. My analogy is it is a 6 day car, drive 6 days work on it the seventh. If you approach the car with the attitude it is a hobby you will be well pleased. They are a lot of fun.

Dean Hagerty

**TRIUMPH SPITFIRE:
THE ULTIMATE
PICK-UP LINE?**

Dear Spitfire Magazine,

I bought a 1976 Spitfire in 1983. Canary yellow and stock. Most people in Milwaukee Wisconsin at that time knew little about sports cars. I was recently divorced and in my late twenties bar hopping years. I used to pick up girls by having the top

down on my spit and parking it right in front of my favorite bar before it opened. You could see the car through big windows that fronted the bar. Anyway, not being Don Juan or anything I would have my friend who owned and tended the bar talk to girls and bring their attention to the spit. Invariably they would ooh and ahh and ask who owned the car. He would point me out and I would suddenly have drinks bought for me etc. The girls would eventually all get a ride and being a gentleman I'd just smile. The clinching line though involved the dash plaque. As we would hum along at dusk the girls would often see the plaque saying "SCCA National Champion 1967, 1968 etc. and they would ask me about it. I would just casually tell them that those were the years I won. Slam dunk.

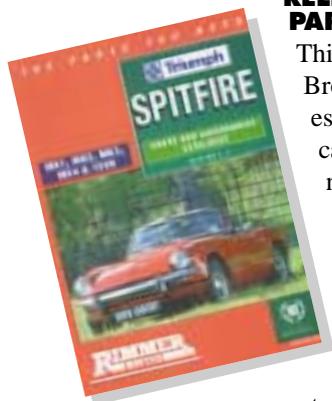
Regarding our favorite inventor "Lord Lucas" I used to converse with a Healey and Midget fan years ago who gave the master electrician an additional nickname. "Lord Lucas - Bringer of Darkness".

Here's to coming up on 90 degree corners at 60, jamming 2nd gear, cranking the wheel and standing on the throttle.

Chuck Newman, '76 1500



RIMMER BROTHERS RELEASES ITS NEW PARTS CATALOG



This summer Rimmer Brothers released its latest Spitfire and GT6 catalogs. If you have never seen one, it is not just loaded with parts but wonderful photos of cars from the Spitfire 4 to the 1500. The catalog

is free and can be requested by calling +44 1522 568000 or by e-mail: sales@rimmerbros.co.uk for UK and export@rimmerbros.co.uk for the rest of the world.

And yes US, they will send it free to you too.

INTERNATIONAL TRIUMPH SPITFIRE DATABASE

In an ongoing effort to identify and record the number and geographic location of all remaining Triumph Spitfires, a website/database has been established. Since much of the data was contributed by Triumph clubs around the world, there are likely many errors. Because much of the data has been accumulated over the course of time, vehicles have changed hands or suffered the fate of accidents, rust or other demise, but have not been removed from the logs of the clubs. Therefore, in viewing the information contained in the database, please watch for information you know to be outdated and use the data entry form to report these errors. So, If you see your car listed, use the data entry page to update any incomplete information. At

the same time, if you know of additional Spitfires that are not listed, use the data entry page to input the new data. The database is updated monthly as time and new data dictate. FYI: Many people who have looked for their 1500 in the database have indicated that they are unable to find it. Most of the time, they did not look far enough down the list.

If you have not already visited, do so soon. The url is: <http://Home1.gte.net/spitlist/index.html>.

There is also a GT6 database being started at <http://personal.cfw.com/~hsgentry/register.html>.

Both can accessed directly or as a hyperlink on TriumphSpitfire.com's links page.

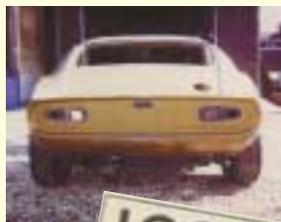
Fibrefab Jamaican Found



FiberFab was a kitcar company located in California with additional shops in Ohio and even Germany. They produced many styled kits that remain to be some of the

most famous among kitcar enthusiasts. Started in 1968, Fiberfab was designed to fit Austin Healey, Triumph, MGA, and VW. Later, bodies were made for front engine V-8 and was offered with its own chassis kit. This particular car uses a Spitfire as its base.

Owner Bob Kanholtz is planning to restore the car this coming spring. If we are lucky, we might get a look at the progress in the next issue..



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Huw Upshall, Washington, USA
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Ric Gibson, Colorado, USA
ricgibson@mho.net
Watch for this car in a engine swap story in a future issue. It will be receiving a 1993 Mazda RX7 engine with twin sequential turbos!



Other Fun Things to Do in a Car

BY PAUL MCAFEE

Games you and your friends can play while behind the wheel of your Spitfire. Great for club meetings.

EGG AND SPOON RACE (2 person event)

Set up slalom course with cones. Passenger has an egg on a spoon slightly smaller than the egg! (Ping pong balls will do if you're short on eggs!) However the spoon must be small enough to make holding the egg difficult. driver moves through the slalom hopefully with no dropped eggs-and the fastest time is the winner.

Soccer Ball Slalom (2 person event)

Set up a line of posts along a 60 foot stretch, holding tape to form a line. If you have no tape, string threaded with paper cups will do. The driver directs the car parallel to the posts and the passenger then tries to guide a soccer ball or basketball, between the posts using a paddle. Finally maneuvering the ball into a bucket lying on its side at the end of the line. A timed event with penalties applied for missing taking the ball between any two posts.

MOVING THE WATER! (2 person event)

Set up a 60 yard "L" shaped course marked with cones. The course could be longer depending upon available space. Competitors are given a coffee can. At the start of the course is placed a

large tub of water. time starts-at which the passenger has to get the tin full of water from the tub. When ready, the driver makes a run to the other end of the course, with the passengers hopefully holding the tin of water out of the side of the car! At the end of the course is placed a suitable receptacle for the water, which incor-

porates some form of measurement so that the amount of water can be calculated. Three turns are made to get the most amount of water down to the other end, but the driver must reverse back each time to the start for the passenger to get more water in the can. This event can be timed or just decided on the most amount of water ferried to the end of the course.

CUPS AND BALLS (Timed 2 person event)

Set out stakes at ten yard intervals-a sixty yard stretch will be fine. Put upturned paper cups on top of each stake. At the start line hand the passenger six tennis balls. The object is to drive the car in and out of the posts while the passenger turns the cups the right way up, and then places a ball in the paper cup which is balanced on top of each post.

WILL IT GO? (Solo event)

Sixty yards away from a start line, set up two posts each of which can be moved by a marshall holding each post. Drivers have to indicate to the marshalls to move the posts closer together, or further away, until the driver thinks the car will just go through the posts. Driver then moves forward and sees how judgmental he has been! The distance from the of the car to each post is then measured and the driver with the smallest total overall measurement is declared the winner. Bucket In The Middle (2 person event) Set up cones in a tight turning circle for the cars being used. Driver circles around the outside of the cones and passenger attempts to lob bean bags into a bucket placed in the center of the circle of cones. Go around three times forward and then try the same in reverse! Most bags in the bucket wins!

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Clear View on the World

Windshield Maintenance

BY TIM JOHNSON



Tools

REQUIRED:

phillips screwdriver
flat screwdriver
thin, strong wooden
or plastic stick
heavy nylon cord
petroleum jelly
patient helper

OPTIONAL:

box cutter
glass polishing kit
new gasket

On our website we have gotten quite a few requests dealing with windshield (windscreen) replacement. Most every question deals with the fear of breaking than anything else. With a caution, your windshield can be removed and replaced with minimal hassle and without danger of breakage.

REMOVAL CAN BE BROKEN DOWN INTO 2 STEPS:

1. remove rear view mirror, sun visors, chrome strips and windshield wipers
2. push out windshield

INSTALLATION HAS 3 STEPS:

1. fit gasket
2. press into car.
3. replace chrome strip, sun visors, windshield wipers and mirror

Of course it is not that easy. This story will go through the steps and make the process as painless as possible.

Removal

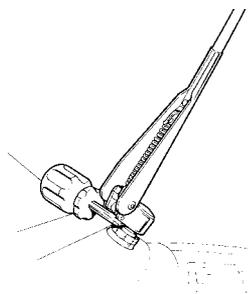
Windshield Maintenance

Quick Tip

Use masking tape to seal the interior heater vents during windshield removal. If the glass is broken or gets broken during removal, flakes of glass won't fall down into the vents and blow out into your face later.

The first process is to remove all the items near the windshield that would be in the way. Start with the interior. Remove the mirror by unscrewing one of the two screws in the mirror's base. The retaining block and mirror should be able to be slid out. The sun visors do not have to be removed but it is a good idea (one less thing to be in your way). They are held on with a single screw at each end. Mk1-3 also have a center screw holding on the mounting bar that will need to be removed.

Before removing the wipers, take note of the position of the blades relative to the frame. This will help get them into the correct position when reinstalling. Removal is accomplished by lifting them to the "cleaning position." Using a large, flat screwdriver between the large nut and the arm, pry up while rocking the arm with your other hand.



Next is the removal of the chrome strip running around the windshield, assuming it is still there. Many cars I have seen lately no longer have it still in place. Start by sliding the center finisher covers over out of the way. Then use your wooden stick to gently pry out the strips.

Glass removal can be easy or difficult depending on whether the windshield gasket be used again. If not, the process is easy. Using a strong knife, like the ones used for carpet or a box cutter, cut the rubber gasket away from the glass. Push the blade into the center of the rubber, carefully feeling where the glass stops.

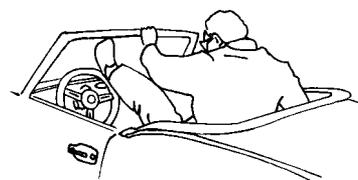
Cut all the way around. The glass can easily be pushed out from the inside.

If the gasket is still in good shape, things get a little more difficult. The rubber is supposed to

be soft having no cracks. If there is any doubt, replace it. It's not very expensive, under \$30 (£20), and will be more flexible making installation easier and less likely to leak.

Run the wooden stick around the circumference between the gasket and frame to break the sealant applied at the factory.

Sitting in the passenger's seat, using your foot (soft, flexible shoes work best), gently



push the glass. Don't KICK! Remember, the more evenly the pressure on the glass, the less likely you are to crack it. Your helper should stand in the engine bay, on the tires. Using the stick again, push it under the inside lip at the top, prying just enough to get the rubber started through the frame, all the time being ready to catch the glass when it comes out.

While it is out...

there are a few things that should be done before reinstallation. Number one is to clean the glass. All traces of sealant must be removed before the new gasket goes back on. This is easily done by rubbing with your finger. A suitable window cleaner should remove dirt and grease.

FIX THE RUST

Another area to check is the windshield frame for rust. Spitfire/GT6's often rust there and it is much easier dealt with the windshield out of the car. A wire brush and your favorite spray rust converter will do the trick.

POLISH THE GLASS

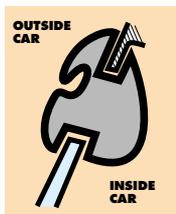
Having the glass out of the car is the perfect opportunity to polish the glass. Years of abuse



Refitting

Windshield Maintenance

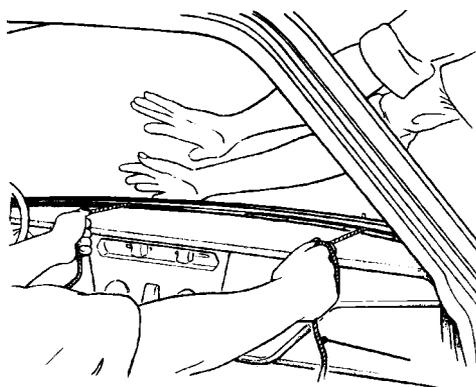
Refitting the windshield is often a source of great frustration. Following these instructions will help make it relatively painless.



Start the process by fitting the gasket to windshield. Run a bead of sealant along the channel on the bottom half of the gasket. Because of its bowed shape, it goes on easier by slipping it on from what is the inside of the windshield. The heavy side goes to the inside, the side with the slit goes to the outside.

With your finger, rub petroleum jelly in the groove where the rubber meets the car. Put a little extra at the top and bottom at the center. Next starting at the bottom center, feed the heavy nylon cord around the same groove you just rubbed the jelly. You will need to have at

least 2 feet extra overlapping in the center. The petroleum jelly serves two purposes, to help lubricate the gasket and keep the cord from sliding out of the groove. The windshield can now be laid in place from the outside of the car with the loose cords to the interior. With the assistant firmly pressing the rubber against the car to prevent the lip from slipping off, you slowly pull one cord out moving around the frame. This will draw the rubber lip over the flange of the body.



When it is in you will need to clean up any excess petroleum jelly, reinstall the mirror, visors, chrome strips and wipers. Use the diagram below to get correct position of the wiper blades.

Quick Tip

Leave the gasket in the sun prior to installation. This will warm the rubber and make it more flexible.

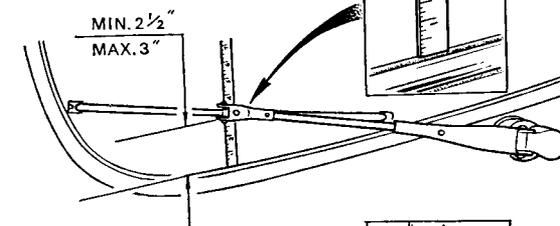


by the wiper blades and ice scrapers take their toll. However, there is a way to remove scratches from the glass. Specialty automotive glass companies and Eastwood Company (www.EastwoodCompany.com, 800-820-9042) sell polishing kits that will remove the haze. Using a special polishing compound (Rhodite) and buffing wheel attached to a hand drill, you will be able to buff out all the glare causing swirls.

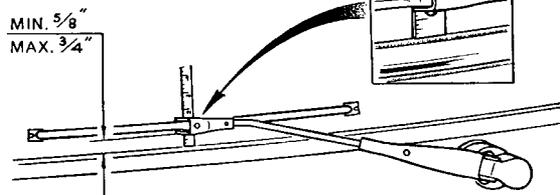
CLEAN THE DASH

Don't forget to clean the dash while the windshield out. A vacuum cleaner will remove all the trapped dust around the vents. One trick I learned revitalizing a very sun-faded dash is to "paint" it using shoe paint. Not polish but the paint used to fix badly scuffed leather (my wife bought it to fix the heels of a pair of dress shoes.) It is durable, easily put on using a rag, opaque enough to hide most blemishes and is sold at most shoe stores.

LEFT SIDE



RIGHT SIDE



Putting Your Baby to Bed

Winter Storage

BY TIM JOHNSON

Quick Tips

1. Make a checklist of monthly requirements and tape it to the steering wheel
2. Run the car monthly
3. Make sure the car is clean, dry and cool before storage

Winter is an especially hard time of the year for cars. Rain, salt and mud are the enemy of metal and will attack your car at an alarming rate. The obvious answer would be to take the car off the road until the weather improves. The trouble is that cars are designed for regular use. If they sit around idle, mechanical and electrical components will corrode and rubber and leather will crack. Lack of air circulation will encourage mold in the interior, and body work can rust. The idea is protect the car from the elements while fooling the car into believing it is being used.

COSMETIC PREPARATION

The first job to prepare your car for a lay up is to clean it. Dirt traps moisture against the car and contains salts that will accelerate corrosion. It also retains airborne pollutants that damage the paint. Use a hose or jet-wash to clean the underside, suspension and engine bay. You may need a brush to shift heavy accumulations. Now wash the exterior and chamois it off, then go for a spin to evaporate any trapped water.

Wax the exterior paint work to remove oxidized paint and protect the paint, then reapply and don't buff it.

Chrome requires special treatment. Only use waxes that are "clearcoat safe" because others

contain abrasives that can scratch. Vaseline or a proprietary product such as Protec "N" Store is a better bet.

Humidity is the enemy of the leather and wood of your interior and will deteriorate them if stored unprotected.

Use a leather cleaning

product then follow up with a dose of leather food to keep them supple and moisture-proof. Because it is nearly impossible to seal out all

sources of moisture, leave the car windows open slightly to allow the air to circulate. If the car is prone to wet carpets, remove them and store in a dry place. Place a container of silica gel (available from home improvement stores) in the car to remove excess moisture.

A strong vacuum should be used to remove dirt from the carpets and seat cracks. Do not forget the trunk.

GARAGES

Of course a garage is the best defense, but if one is not available, there are various covers on the market designed to keep out the elements. Non-breathable covers such as polythene or tarpaulin can do more harm than good by trapping condensation against the car, preventing the air from drying it out. Far better is to purchase one made of Technalon®, a material which keeps rain out but allows existing moisture to evaporate away. Carcoon or Car-Capsule, as their names suggest, use a plastic "bubble" blown-up around the car. A low-voltage electric fan circulates air in and around the car never allowing contact with the car's paint.

Although you might think a garage will keep your car out of the moisture, it often is worse than being outside. Leaks and condensation leaching up from the floor can bring moisture levels higher than outside. If the floor does have this problem, a sheet of polythene on the floor would help. You can cover this with a layer of old carpet, which will help insulate the garage from cold-temperature changes which promote condensation. Skip the carpet if you regularly use the garage. Like a sponge, it will hold water that drips from the car radiating it back into the air later.

A dehumidifier does a wonderful job, but is only really necessary if there is excessive water problem. On the other side, it can pull so much humidity from the air that your car's leather,



wood or other natural materials will dry out and crack.

Even if the garage is naturally dry, you still need to circulate air in there occasionally. Open the door every month to allow the garage to get fresh air. Wait until the warmest part of the day when humidity has been dissipated by the heat of the sun especially if the garage is in a low-lying area.

MECHANICAL PREPARATION

Many mechanical and electrical components will suffer less from the winter weather than they do from inactivity. The easiest way to keep everything in good condition is to go for a drive every few weeks. Be sure to use all of the accessories; they need use also. When your drive, allow the car to cool before putting it away to avoid bringing extra moisture into the garage.

If you will not be able to drive the car occasionally, preparation and storage becomes more involved. You need to get into a routine of maintenance to keep everything in top condition. First, you will need to run the car regularly, so park the car in the garage nose first so that the exhaust can escape.

Tires and wheel bearings develop flat spots if they have the car's weight bearing down in one position for extended periods. Over-inflate the tires up to 50 percent over their usual pressures to minimize the problem, and periodically roll the car into a different position. If there is not enough room in your garage, consider putting the car on axle stands to take the weight off the wheels.

Your engine's oil protects its internals from rust during short periods of inactivity. However, eventually it drains into the pan, leaving bores, camshaft and crankshaft bearings vulnerable. It is absolutely essential that the oil and filter are changed before layup. Combustion creates acids and condensation that attack metal. An extra margin of security is achieved by squirting oil into spark plug holes. It can be distributed by hand turning the crank. This helps guarantee a oil fresh film coating in the bores.

You're better off cranking the engine on the starter, with the coil lead disconnected, until oil



pressure builds up. This circulates the oil properly around the engine. Now re-connect that lead, start the engine and run it for at least 20 minutes at full operating temperature. Running it for just a few minutes is counter-productive. It creates only enough heat to attract moisture into the engine and exhaust. While you're waiting, operate the clutch to prevent it sticking, and use all of the gears.

While waiting for the car to warm up, operate every control and piece of electrical equipment, including the radio/cassette player. Commutators in electric motors oxidize if not regularly polished by the brushes.

Brake discs and drums rust quickly if not used. With the car running in gear, gently apply the brakes several times to prevent pistons and calipers seizing and keep the friction surfaces rust-free in the drive wheels. You can protect the discs or drums on un-driven wheels with a coat of Vaseline after removing the pads or shoes-remember to clean it off at the end of the storage period with thinners.

When the static run is over, give the bumpers a few bounces to clean off the corrosion from the exposed piston surfaces of the shocks.

Stuff a heavy rag into the air intake to the carburetor. I have heard of mice setting up home in there, shredding the air filter and live happily undisturbed until spring. Think about what happens to your engine when paper shreds, etc. get sucked into the carb and beyond. You must

remember to remove the rag before starting the car or it will be sucked in.

Bearings in alternators, water pumps and dynamos can be damaged by the pressure of the drive belt in one position, so slacken them for light relief. Now is a good time to check or replace the coolant. Refill with quality glycol-based coolant containing corrosion inhibitors, at the recommended concentration of 30-50 percent.

Batteries last longest if kept in a fully-charged state. They spontaneously discharge themselves if they get below 50 percent. Sulphation on the internal plates reduces battery capacity eventually making it unable to accept charge. The static run should recharge the battery after starting the engine. If you won't be running the car, remove the battery and connect it to a trickle charger.

Winter may seem to be a chance to save on running costs. After all, if you don't drive the car, why pay for the insurance. Be sure to check with your insurance company. If your garage burns, for example, is your car covered?

You may have to switch types of coverage during the lay-up.

SPRING HAS SPRUNG...

It's tempting to fling open the garage door and go roaring off when the first sign of spring sun appears, but hold on a minute.

Check the list of jobs to do, that you tied to the steering wheel when you laid the car up. It should remind you to do things like removing Vaseline from brake discs, refitting pads, tightening the belts, removing the rag in the intake and taking the car off its axle stands!

Check that the battery is charged up and crank the engine with the ignition disabled to build up oil pressure before starting it. Finally, recheck the fluid levels and give the brakes a few pumps to make sure that they are working.

No one ever said owning a classic would be easy, but proper care is less hassle than freeing up or rebuilding seized up components while everyone else is out on the road enjoying the warm spring sun.



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English to English

Dictionary of Terminology

ENGLISH	AMERICAN	ENGLISH	AMERICAN
Aerial	Antenna	Indicator	Turn signal
Accelerator	Gas pedal	Interior light	Dome lamp
Alternator	Generator (AC)	Layshaft (of gearbox)	Countershaft
Anti-roll bar	Sway bar	Locks	Latches
Bodywork	Sheet metal	Motorway	Freeway, turnpike etc
Bonnet	Hood	Number plate	License plate
Boot lid	Trunk lid	Paraffin	Kerosene
Boot (luggage)	Trunk	Petrol	Gasoline
Bottom gear	1st gear	Propeller shaft	Driveshaft
Bulkhead	Firewall	“Pinking”	“Pinging”
Cam follower or tappet	Valve lifter	Quarter light	Quarter window
Carburettor	Carburetor	Rocker cover	Valve cover
Catch	Latch	Roof rack	Car-top carrier
Choke/venturi	Barrel	Saloon	Sedan
Circlip	Snap-ring	Seized	Frozen
Clearance	Lash	Side indicator lights	Side marker lights
Crownwheel	Ring gear	Side light	Parking light
Disc (brake)	Rotor/disk	Silencer	Muffler
Drop head coupe	Convertible	Spanner	Wrench
Dynamo	Generator (DC)	Sill panel	Rocker panel
Earth (electrical)	Ground	Split pin	Cotter pin
Estate car	Station wagon	Steering arm	Spindle arm
Exhaust manifold	Header	Sump	Oil pan
Fastback (Coupe)	Hard top	Tappet	Valve lifter
Float chamber	Float bowl	Thrust bearing	Throw-out bearing
Free-play	Lash	Top gear	High
Freewheel	Coast	Trackrod	Tie-rod
Gudgeon pin	Piston pin or wrist pin	Transmission	Whole drive line
Gearchange	Shift	Tyre	Tire
Gearbox	Transmission	Vice	Vise
Halfshaft	Axle shaft	Wheel nut	Lug nut
Handbrake	Parking brake	Windscreen	Windshield
Hood	Soft top	Wing/mudguard	Fender

Brand New Spitfire?

BY CAROLE FRANKLIN

I think it is every sports car enthusiast's dream; finding a forgotten classic hidden away for years. While driving through small towns, I often catch myself voyeurishly peering into open outbuildings or garages for the slightest hint of a pristine old car buried under junk and years of dust. Dick Harling of Quebec Canada, is one of the lucky few to have such a dream come true. A almost perfect Spitfire.

The car was built in April 1980 as a 1981 model. Lagging demand for Spitfires in North America at the time destined the car to sit unsold and unloved on a sales lot in Montreal until October of 1982. The original owner paid at the time \$C 8,495, about \$6000 US. The car was driven from the lot north to the heated storage



where it sat until mid September of this year. Not wanting to put any additional miles on the car, Dick brought it to his garage on a flat bed transporter. To date, the car has only 383 kilometers (about 240 miles) on the odometer!

“When I bought the car a few weeks ago, the





car hadn't been started for about 10 years" Dick exclaimed. "After cleaning the carb and spark plugs, it runs like a top. I have not driven it and will not until I have changed all the fluids (brake and clutch fluids, coolant, oils, etc.)"

On a warm fall day, Dick decided to show the little car respect. Draining the gas tank and filling it with fresh gas was the first thing done. "I washed and waxed it and its British Racing Green paint looks stunning with the tan herringbone cloth seats. As you can imagine, everything about the car is perfect. The top, tonneau cover, seats and paint all just like the day it came from the factory." Of course, Dick has all original manuals and documents. He even has the original bill of sale!

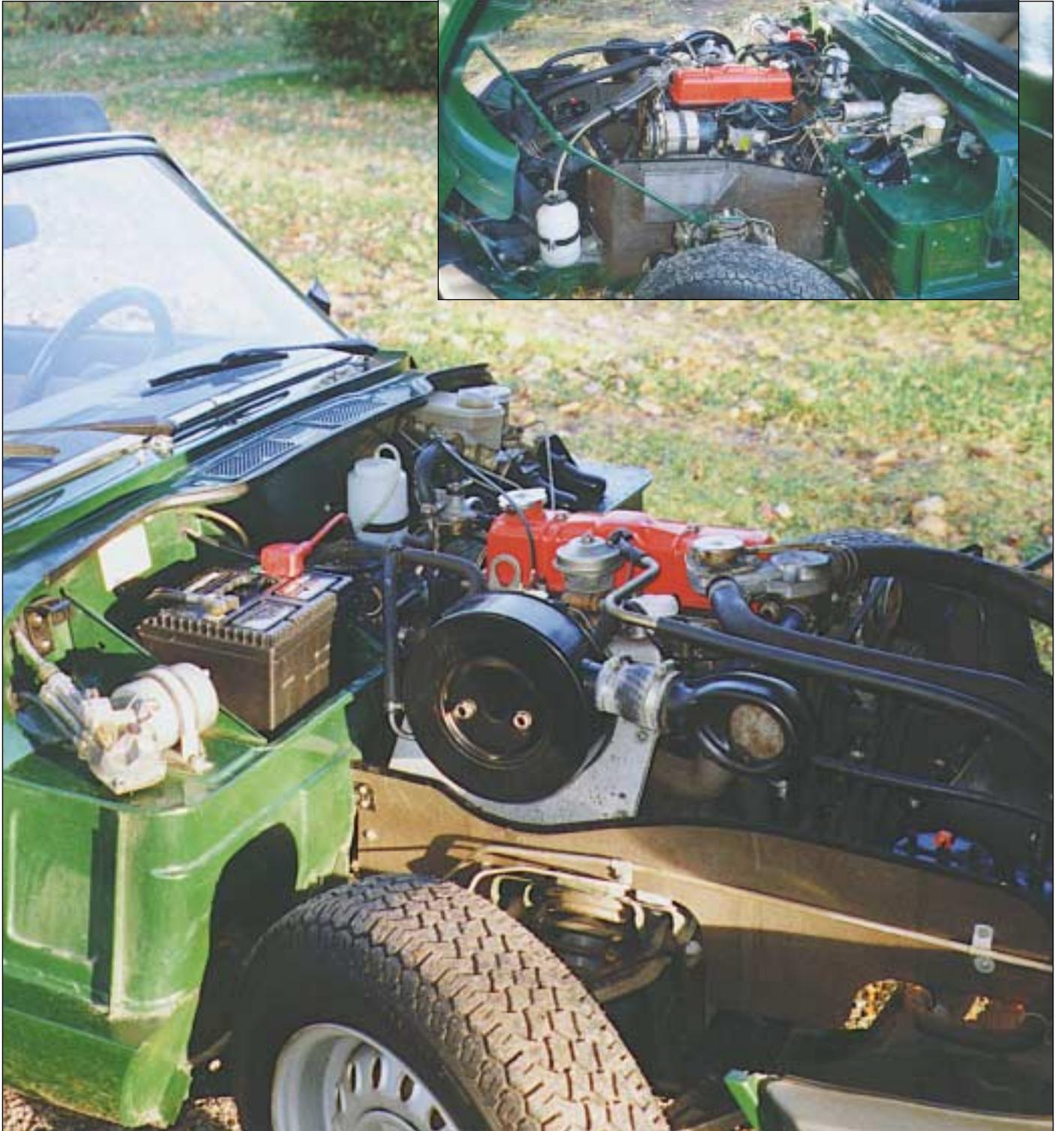
The car has a catalytic converter and is made to North American specifications. The only difference from the US model is that the

speedometer is calibrated to kilometers rather than miles. "When will the good old USA get with the rest of the world and adapt the metric system?" Dick jokes.

Probably the most surprising aspect about this story is that Dick would consider selling the car. "I don't really know if I will keep the car." Dick owns other classic cars and doesn't want to keep the car from someone who really loves Spitfires. He assured me he purchased it to keep it from falling into uncaring hands. "I have it in a good, secure storage now and will not make any decisions as to its future until next spring." The car located in Sainte Agathe des Monts, Quebec Canada, about an hour's drive north of Montreal.

Maybe in the new year, we will be as lucky as Dick was finding this car. If not, serious inquiries can e-mailed to him at harling@intlautentides.qc.ca.





Slave Cylinder Replacement

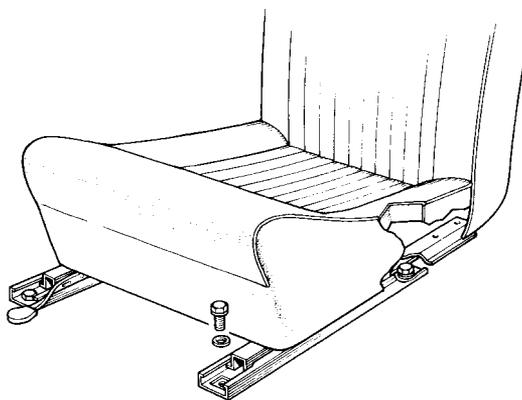
BY PAUL MCAFEE

There is good and bad news associated with doing this job. The good is that the repair is extremely easy to accomplish. The bad news is that it will take a full day to get to it and reassemble everything when the job is completed. Don't bother looking for an easy way. There isn't one. This story illustrates the procedure. Socket sizes are in parenthesis after the item it fits.

REMOVAL

First remove the left seat. This is done by sliding the seat all the way back and taking out the two screws (7/16") at the front of the tracks. The rear of the tracks has two screws that can be reached by sliding the seats all the way forward. Lift out the seat,

The trim pieces around the transmission



Tools

REQUIRED:

phillips screwdriver
large flat screwdriver
socket wrenches
open-ended wrench
brake fluid
slave cylinder rebuild kit

OPTIONAL:

new slave cylinder

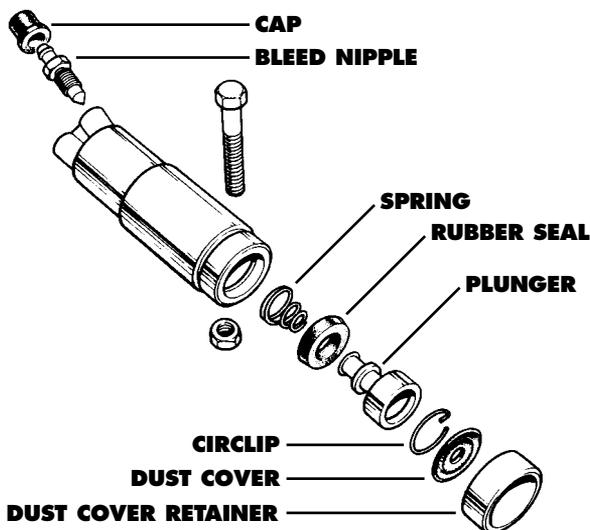
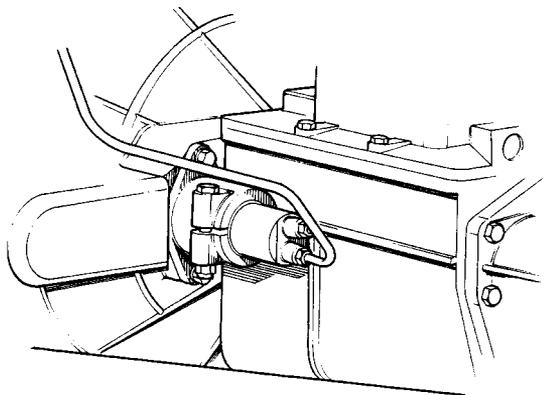
tunnel must be removed. Take out the 4 screws holding in the tunnel cover and the 2 screws holding on the knee pads. Next remove the lower dash support. It is held in place at the top two screws (phillips screwdriver) and at the bottom by four bolts (1/2"). Remove the shift knob.

The carpeting covering the transmission tunnel needs to be removed. Next remove the transmission tunnel. It is held in place with 4 set screws on each side and 4 on the back against the firewall (8mm).

The slave cylinder is now easily accessible. Start by loosening the bleed valve (7/16"),



draining the system and the remove the valve. Remove the hydraulic pipe (7/16") and push it clear of the cylinder. Then remove the locating bolt, nut and washer (1/2"). The cylinder may be difficult to slide out. A large screwdriver wedged into to slot in the side of the housing should loosen it.



INSPECTION

Remove the dust cover retainer and the dust cover. The retainer may require a pipe wrench with a gentle twisting motion while pulling for removal. Next remove the circlip. The plunger will either side out easily or can be helped along by tapping the whole cylinder against a wooden surface. Remove the spring. Clean all parts thoroughly with brake fluid. Never use gasoline or other petroleum based solvents as they damage rubber.

The first thing that needs to be determined is whether the cylinder is repairable. Carefully inspect the rubber parts. If there are any splits or cracks, there is a good chance that all that needs to be changed is the rubber. Run your finger inside the cylinder feeling for scratches or pitting. If there are minor scratches, try using a fine steel wool to buff them out. Thoroughly wash the inside with brake fluid to remove ALL traces of metal flakes. If the pits are too deep a new cylinder must be purchased.

REBUILD

Rebuilding is a rather easy process. Start by fitting a new rubber seal to the plunger with the fat end away from the metal end. Insert the

While it is out...

there are some things that you should consider doing while you have access to this area.

CHANGE THE TRANSMISSION FLUID

Drain the fluid out of bottom and replace the plug. Open the filler plug on the right side to transmission and fill until fluid just trickles out.

REINSULATE TRANSMISSION TUNNEL

After a while the insulation inside the transmission tunnel rots away or falls out. Staple or glue in new insulation. Don't forget that it will be exposed to the elements so waterproof it with plastic sheeting.

REBUSH THE SHIFTER KNOB

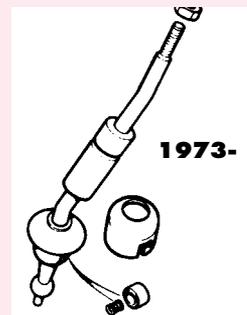
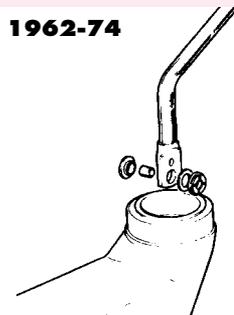
Shifter getting sloppy? Rebush it. The parts can be purchased individually or as a kit.

OIL CAPACITY

without overdrive 1.8 pints, .851
with overdrive 2.85 pints, 1.351

TORQUE SETTINGS

Drain plug: Mk4-20ft/lbs, 1500-25 ft/lbs
Filler plug: Mk4-20ft/lbs, 1500-25 ft/lbs



spring fat end first. Wash the inside of the cylinder with brake fluid then insert the plunger rubber side first. Fit the retaining spring, dust cover and then the cover retainer.

REFIT

When refitting the cylinder, start by centralizing the push rod in the housing. Push the slave cylinder into the housing with the push rod going into the dust cover. Line up the groove with the hole and place the bolt in through the top hole and tighten the nut.

BLEEDING THE SYSTEM

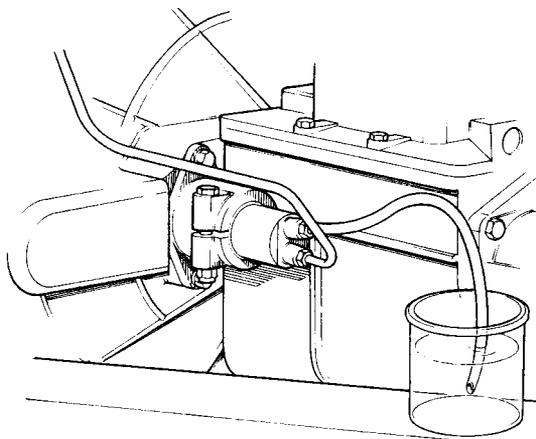
The hardest part about bleeding is the tendency to run out of fluid. The process is so easy that you just forget to check the level. Better yet, ask an assistant to monitor the lever while you work. Start by filling the reservoir with new, clean brake fluid. Next place a small, preferably clear tube on the bleed

nipple. Put the other end of the tube into a cup partially filled with fluid.



Loosen the nipple one turn. Depress the clutch pedal fully and let it return without assistance. Repeat with a few second pause between depressions. Notice the fluid going into the cup. When a solid stream is emitted from the tube without any air bubbles, hold the pedal to the floor and tighten the nipple.

The clutch pedal should feel firm and clearly disengage the clutch. If not, repeat the bleeding process. Don't forget to check the fluid level.



REFITTING EVERYTHING ELSE

Refitting all the interior parts is done in the reverse order that they were removed.

Cool Tool

Is there anything more difficult than trying to bleed brakes by myself. I try to get the wife to help and can't figure out why she gets so frustrated. If this sounds like you well I have found the tool for you. It is call the Mityvac® from Prism Enterprises. It is a hand held pump that *pulls* the fluid through the system. It pulls about 1 cu. in. of fluid with each stroke, pulling out dirt, old fluid and air. It develops and hold approximately 25 inches of vacuum. The Minivac comes in kit form with multiple sizes of tubing and enough adapters that it will fit on almost any system. The Minivac's big brother, the Mityvac, comes with a vacuum gauge built into the top. It will do all of the above plus many engine related vacuum test. It can act as a compression tester, fuel pressure tester, and many other helpful ignition and carburetor tests.

The Minivac sells for about \$30 from specialty automotive tools companies like Eastwood Company (www.EastwoodCompany.com, 800-820-9042)



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Supermarine Spitfire

Road Test:

**TRIUMPH
SPITFIRE**



Triumph Spitfire

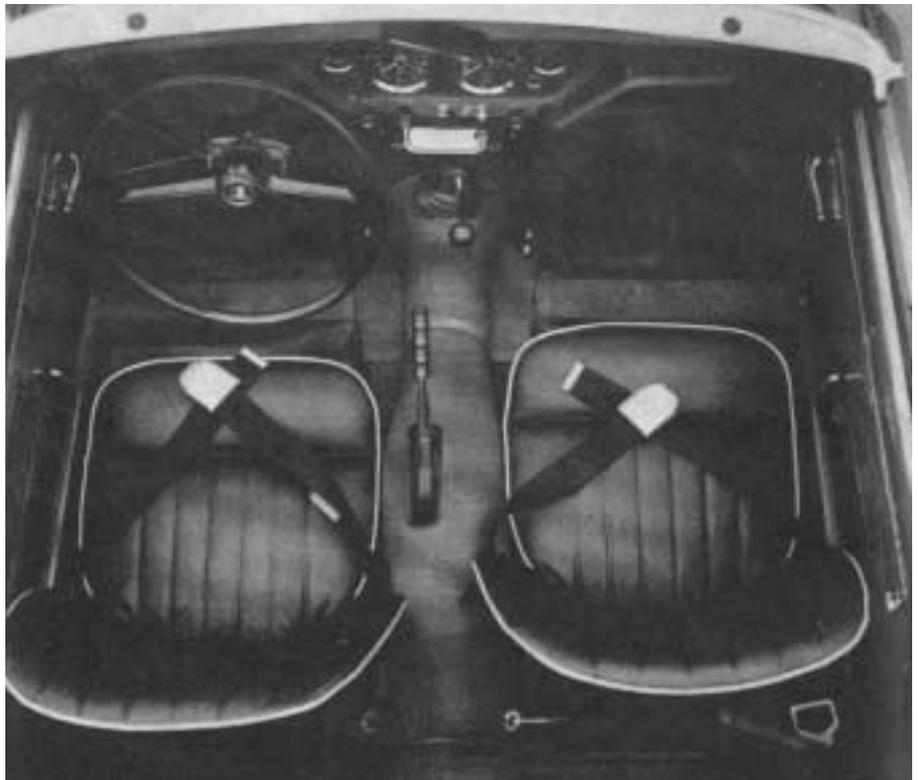
CAR and DRIVER

ROAD TEST

Triumph

Spitfire

A new small sports car combines silence with lively performance



An almost austere interior offers average sports-car comfort, handy controls and good weatherproofing. The centrally located instruments are large and legible.

Meeting a brand-new model is always an interesting experience. Its looks and specifications instill you with some more or less definite expectations, and quite often your ideas about the car alter drastically during the first drive. The Spitfire surprised us by having more to offer than was promised by its appearance.

One of the nicest and least expected things about this car is its ability to be driven like a big car—the sports version of the 1200 engine has amazing torque at low rpm, which in combination with the light weight of the car gives the Spitfire unusual flexibility. You can tool along in traffic at 15 mph in third gear, or climb moderately steep hills at 40 mph in top, without a trace of protest from the engine. It takes it all in stride, and with remarkable silence for a sports car of “buzz-box” size. Engine noise depends to a large extent on the load, and except when pulling hard it is fairly silent throughout the entire speed range. Even on full-throttle acceleration, it does not become noisy until it reaches the peak of the torque curve at 3,500 rpm.

Triumph's recipe for a small sports car differs from the average in more than one respect. Its construction is based on a rigid box-girder steel frame, and in addition the body (apart from the forward section) is of unitized construction. This kind of structural strength is rare in any kind of car. The Spitfire is also alone among small sports cars in having independent suspension of all four wheels.

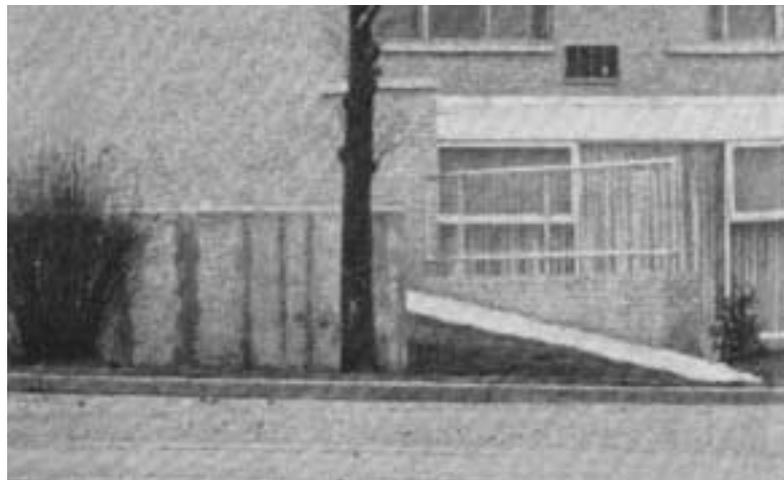
While relying extensively on components used on the Herald, the Spitfire has substantially different characteristics. Its lower center of gravity has still further increased its roll stiffness, and the reduced frontal area has increased its performance.

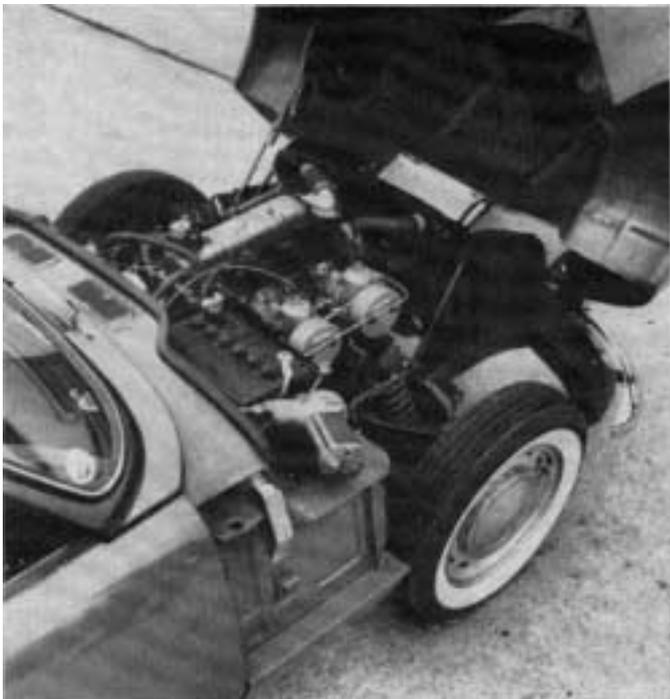
Unfortunately, the improvement in aerodynamics has also increased its sensitivity to sidewind, and at turnpike cruising speeds the car is subjected to wind buffeting to an uncomfortable degree. Wind noise,

however, is very low, and normal conversation in the car (with the top up) is possible at 80 mph.

Michelotti, who designed the angular Herald some years ago, has broken into a completely new style for the Spitfire, with gentle curves from bumper to bumper. In over-all size it is longer than the MG Midget (*February, 1962 C/D*) by 8½ inches, and it has more interior room as well as more trunk space. The seats have adequate travel to make a six-footer feel at home, and are of a simple bucket design which offers average sports-car comfort. The pedals are ever so slightly offset in relation to the driver's seat, because of the width of the engine and flywheel housing, but this is hardly noticeable in practice. The pedals, though small, are well spaced and placed—but there is no room for a foot between the clutch and the dimmer switch. The situation is the same as in the TR-4:

Its great maneuverability and lively performance makes it an





Accessibility to the engine is practically unlimited, thanks to the forward-tilting hood which also lifts the body sides.



Trunk capacity is restricted, since the 10.8 gallon fuel tank takes up much of the space behind the passenger compartment.

ideal car in traffic. The view is good in spite of low seats.



Either you bend your leg into a less comfortable and less useful position; or you rest your left foot on the dimmer switch, which is not fixed to the floor but mounted on a separate bracket fixed to the side wall. This arrangement easily becomes irritating at night, when you inadvertently switch from low to high beam and vice versa when replacing the foot after gear changes, especially before corners.

Alford and Alder supply the rack-and-pinion steering, which is the same as on the 1200, with the same wonderful qualities. It is light at all times, yet highly responsive without transmitting any road shocks to the steering wheel. As for steering characteristics, the Spitfire is as nearly neutral throughout its speed range as it is possible to come. Under all normal conditions, it will go exactly where it is pointed, and it is never the front wheels which let go if you push the car beyond its limit. Eventually the tail end comes out, but it gives ample warning and is easily brought in line again, merely by turning the steering wheel.

All-independent suspension on light front-engined sports cars is such a logical thing that it seems strange that so few factories show any interest in it. Triumph, in fact, stands alone in taking up the swing-axle inheritance of such popular pre-war cars as Hansa, Skoda and Steyr, which had swing axles on front-engined cars down to 1,100 cc. displacement. While the Triumph 1200 swing axles often let the wheels assume



The amazing steering lock of the Herald in combination with a shorter wheelbase gives a turning-circle diameter of 24 feet.

positive camber, the Spitfire wheels have shorter travel and smaller variations in camber angles, as well as tending towards a negative rather than a positive camber. This makes it more surefooted on hard cornering, and has been made possible by the less variable weight distribution of a two-seater over a four-seater of comparable size.

If the swing-axle principle promises superiority in comparison with rigid axles, the Spitfire does not offer convincing proof that this is so in practice. The limited wheel travel has made it necessary to use a quite hard spring, with the result that the ride is not markedly better than in some beam-axle sports cars. The Spitfire is in its element on smooth or almost smooth surfaces, but on rough roads it is not only harsh, the tail tends to jump about a bit, losing traction in the process. In order to benefit fully from the reduced unsprung weight of independent rear suspension, springing must be very progressive so that the suspension will be supple on little bumps, yet will not bottom on big ones.

SPITFIRE ROAD TEST *CONTINUED*

The entire transmission is taken unaltered from the 1200. Wide spacing of the gears, coupled with the engine's amazing flexibility, makes the Spitfire more a good traffic car than a competition model. It is possible to start in second even on uphill inclines, without being too rough on the clutch. Many drivers will appreciate this, since first gear is not synchronized. The synchromesh is good on third and fourth, but it is necessary to stop in neutral before engaging second if you are to avoid a loud clunk from the mechanism. On the credit side, let us mention that the short, cranked lever is conveniently located and quite smooth in its movements. We particularly liked the reverse engagement, which is done by pressing down on the top of the lever and moving it left and forward (next to first gear). It is simple and completely foolproof.

Small drum brakes are used for the rear wheels, with large discs at front. There is no servo, and pedal pressures even on heavy braking are so light as to make power assistance redundant. Stopping power is limited only by the Dunlop C-41 tires, which were fine on dry surfaces but not up to standard in the wet. This was manifest also in the form of wheelspin on acceleration, which would not occur in the dry but was almost unavoidable in the wet.

Living with the Spitfire for a wintry week gave us none of the hardship so often complained about in connection with small sports cars. The top is quite tight and draftproof (when the roll-up windows are up), and a powerful one-speed heater makes it possible to ride in sub-zero temperatures without an overcoat. As for removing and erecting the top, it is obvious that Triumph has settled for a compromise solution in order to avoid stealing useful stowage space when the top is not in use. The frame is fully detachable, not only from the top itself but also from the



When putting the top up, you first place the frame in its right position, put the top over and fasten it, rear first.

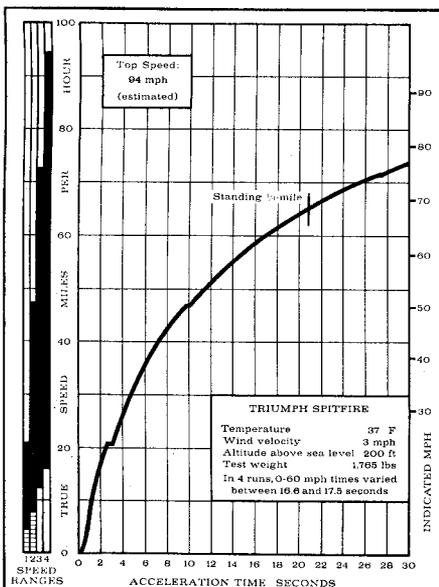
body sides, and fits into the trunk where it does not obstruct luggage space owing to its shape. The top also folds into a neat package, easily stowed away in the trunk, which leaves the entire space behind the seats free for small baggage, umbrellas and overcoats.

On the whole the Spitfire is a more practical car for everyday use than anything we have so far seen in this size. It has added advantages in requiring very little regular maintenance (no grease points and 3,000-mile oil-change intervals) and relying upon so many Triumph 1200 spare parts which are in good supply here. Everyone who saw our test car commented on its good looks, and we have come to believe that the Spitfire has a good chance to take over the position as Triumph's best-selling model in the U.S. market. **cjd**

TRIUMPH SPITFIRE

Price as tested: \$2,199 P.O.E. N.Y.

Importer: Standard-Triumph Motor Co., Inc.
575 Madison Avenue
New York 22, New York



ENGINE:

Displacement..... 70 cu in, 1,147 cc
Dimensions... 4 cyl, 2.73-in bore, 2.99-in stroke
Valve gear... Pushrod-operated overhead valves
Compression ratio..... 9.0 to one
Power (SAE)..... 63 bhp @ 5,750 rpm
Torque..... 67 lb-ft @ 3,500 rpm
Usable range of engine speeds... 1,000-6,000 rpm
Carburetion..... Twin SU HS-2 carburetors
Fuel recommended..... Premium
Mileage..... 28-36 mpg
Range on 10.8-gallon tank..... 300-400 miles

CHASSIS:

Wheelbase..... 83 in
Track..... F 49 in, R 48 in
Length..... 145 in
Ground clearance..... 5 in
Suspension: F: Ind., wishbones and coil springs, anti-roll bar
R: Ind., swing axles, transverse leaf spring and radius rods
Steering..... Rack and pinion
Turns, lock to lock..... 3½
Turning circle diameter between curbs... 24 ft
Tire size..... 5.20 x 13
Pressures recommended: Normal F 18, R 24 psi
High-speed F 24, R 30 psi
Brakes..... Girling 9-in discs front, 7-in drums rear, 199 sq in swept area
Curb weight (full tank)..... 1,600 lbs
Percentage on the driving wheels..... 44

DRIVE TRAIN:

Clutch..... Borg & Beck 6¼-in single dry plate
Mph per 1,000

Gear	Synchro	Ratio	Step	Over-all	rpm
Rev	No	3.76	—	15.40	4.5
1st	No	3.76	73%	15.40	4.5
2nd	Yes	2.17	63%	8.87	7.8
3rd	Yes	1.39	39%	5.73	12.0
4th	Yes	1.00	—	4.11	15.7

Final drive ratio..... 4.11 to one



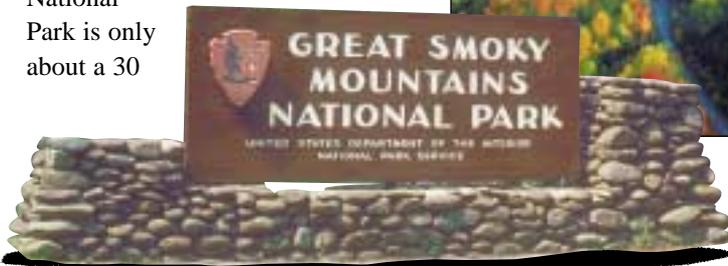
The All Day "30 minute drive"

BY TIM JOHNSON

It had been months since the poor little green Spitfire had left the garage for more than getting a newspaper on a Sunday morning. It was such a beautiful fall day. Time was right to treat the Spit to an afternoon drive!

Wanting the whole family to take advantage of this relaxing occasion, I loaded up my wife Sally and our dog Blauser, and we headed out...destination the Great Smoky Mountains National Park in Gatlinburg, Tennessee.

As I turned the key - to my surprise the engine fired first try. The National Park is only about a 30



minute drive from our house. A rather long journey in Spitfire time, but the Spit felt up for it. As I drove up onto Interstate 40 vibrating just a bit from an tire balance, or air pressure problem, there was no better feeling than to be greeted by people in passing cars waiving at my Spitfire. They must be reminising about the days they owned a sleek "sports car". The combination of other drivers' attention, the wind cutting smoothly through my hair, Blauser's figurehead pose with his chin in air behind Sally's seat, this was what the Spitfire ownership was all about. I must have looked like a genius at this moment to Sally with the low acquisition cost I had given for this green machine. She seemed to be taking in the moment...slowly sinking into her seat. She really

appeared to be enjoying herself and forgetting about all the times she had nagged me about the parts-car in the backyard, parts laying all over the garage, having to park her car outside for the night, and all the times she proudly proclaimed "will you ever get this thing running". It was running now and we were off to the mountains for a great afternoon.

For those of you who have never been to the Great Smoky Mountains, before you reach the beautiful National Park there is a stretch of tourist "traps" for about 12 miles consisting of theaters, restaurants, motels, amusements, stores, and other various attractions. The area draws about 11 million visitors a year which means many times these little mountain roads are bumper to bumper. Today was one of those days.

As I sat in traffic inching up little by little, I began to smell that dreaded burning scent that

On the Road Again



haunts car owners. Was it the brakes from riding in the heavy traffic ...or was that the clutch wearing hard smell were I was off the clutch moving a few feet than on the clutch stopping? I knew it wasn't a good aroma and this Spit needed a break, not to mention it could use a bit of fuel. The gas gauge was reading low and the gas I had in the car was probably six months old. Do any stations still sell regular leaded gas? Not any more. I decided to filler up with premium unleaded at about 93 octane. It might help clean out the car's cobwebs and build my performance and miles per gallon quota. After \$11.00 or 9 gallons of gas, a couple sandwiches, bags of chips, cold cokes, and a beef jerky for Blauser, we were ready to resume the cruising. Feeling gutsy, I thought we would drive up to Clingman's Dome would show the Spitfire's stuff (one of the highest points in the park with a nice 1/2 mile hiking trail to an obser-

vation tower. Just on the Tennessee North Carolina border.) A slow creeping slope of about 15 miles up the mountain with light traffic would highlight this days journey. After all, the bad smells had dissipated and if the car has problems up on top... I could always coast the Spitfire to the bottom and the Park entrance.

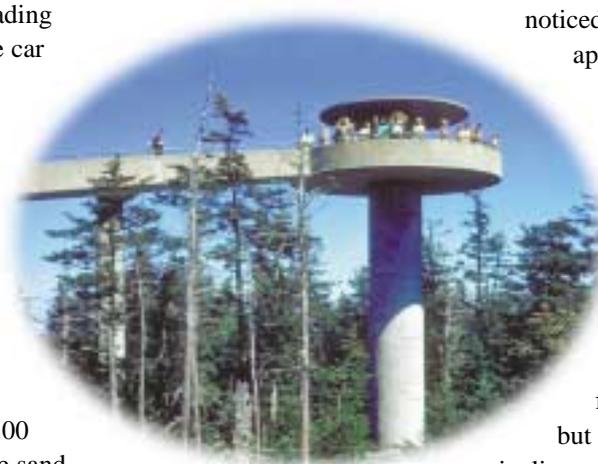
We began the long 15 mile tedious ascent of the Great Smoky Mountains to our planned destination of Clingman's Dome. I use the word tedious because the Green Spitfire's power had much to be desired.

Although the slope was not that steep 6% grade or so, the car just did not want to move at any "Indy" style pace. It just seemed to be flat, bogging down. I thought I might have to buy a parade permit if any more cars began lining up behind me, as we slowly proceeded up the mountain road. I

noticed the temperature gauge appearing to be a little high and now there seemed the return of another odorous distraction. This time I wasn't to concerned about the smell, because I believe it was coming from Blauser from eating that beef, but the high temp on an incline was not settling. Just

ahead I saw a scenic overlook. Great place to stop, let the 'parade' proceed by, air out the car, walk Blauser and let it cool off.

It was a beautiful fall day. A great day in the park. The car was motoring a bit better for the finishing stretch of the climb as we reached the



plateau and parking lot for Clingman's Dome. The hike to the observation deck would take an hour or two, leaving plenty of time for the drive home for the evening we had planned at the theater.

After the hike, the drive down was turning out to be much more fun - handling the car like a movie chase scene on the winding mountainous roads. The steering was good and the car had much more pep going downhill. We were practically to the bottom of the mountain after 15 miles of a rather good road, about to exit the National Park when it happened. The left rear tire just blew out. Completely shredded. It almost looked like the rubber had rotted and the tire edges just disintegrated. Disgusting. Fortunately, we were right at the welcome center parking lot, as I was able to limp the car into the lot for a tire change. Nice thing about Spitfires is the tires are not that difficult to change - if you have your jack and tools. Thank goodness my car still had its the jack and the tire tool. I had used the jack many times before, and knew how it worked. Might want to check to be sure your car has its jack and tire tool and that the spare has air. At this moment the nice thing was my tire had been changed. The bad thing was my thoughts began to wander - to the fact that I still had 30 miles to home and the other 3 tires were in a similar condition as the first. With no second spare in the trunk, it wouldn't matter a bit how easy or how well the jack and tire tool worked. I would never hear the end of it from Sally. I tried hard not to think about it as we drove back through the tourist area... heading for Interstate 40 and the final stretch home.

After 4 hours of driving, hiking and spending an awesome day with the Spitfire, my wife Sally and my dog Blausier, the final 10 mile stretch of

Interstate 40 proved to be too much. Less than 10 miles from home... out of no-where as we were relaxing and cruising home the Green machine just quit. Cutout completely. Died. I repeatedly tried to get it started but it would not fire. I spent an exhausting two hours under the hood trying everything as I listened to Sally quickly forget about the great afternoon's enjoyment, and relapse into her 'nagging the Spitfire' ways. To fuel her disdain of my little green car, was the fact it was I had to beg a friend to tow us home. I was willing to try to push it 10 miles, but it was getting late, and Sally was oh so ever remindful



of the time and our evening theater engagement.

So, after one great afternoon drive, \$25 for gas and drinks, and an evening out, the Spitfire sits quietly in the garage ready to be repaired, further restored, and again made ready for a drive. Next time...I think we'll go to the beach.

P.S. Later investigation revealed the rotor in the distributor disintegrated. Add another \$3 to the day's tally.

This story was submitted by Tim Johnson of Farragut, Tennessee USA. If you have a spitfire journey to share. E-mail it to info@Triumphspitfire.com or mail it with photos to Spitfire Magazine P.O. Box 30806 Knoxville, TN 37930

Everyone with a Spitfire has a story!!

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100% cotton pique knit with
contrasting colored collar, sleeves
and embroidery.

Sizes: S, M, L, XL, 2X, 3X (add
\$3 for 2X & 3X)

Colors (body/contrast):
Maroon/navy (shown),
Birch/black, Forest/navy,
Maize/forest, Red/navy,
Grey/navy, Navy/forest,
White/forest, White/navy

▶ **3002 Classic Jacket \$49**

Sizes: M, L, XL, 2X (add \$5 for 2X) Water repel-
lent Supplex® shell with nylon lining. Zippered
front and storm flap. Colors (body/contrast):
Red/navy, Black/khaki, Forest//khaki, Navy//khaki



▼ **4003 Bi-color Ball Cap \$15**

6 panel, low profile, adjustable to fit all.
Colors: Red/black, Black/black, Spruce/black,
Navy/black, Lemon yellow/black, Silver/black



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