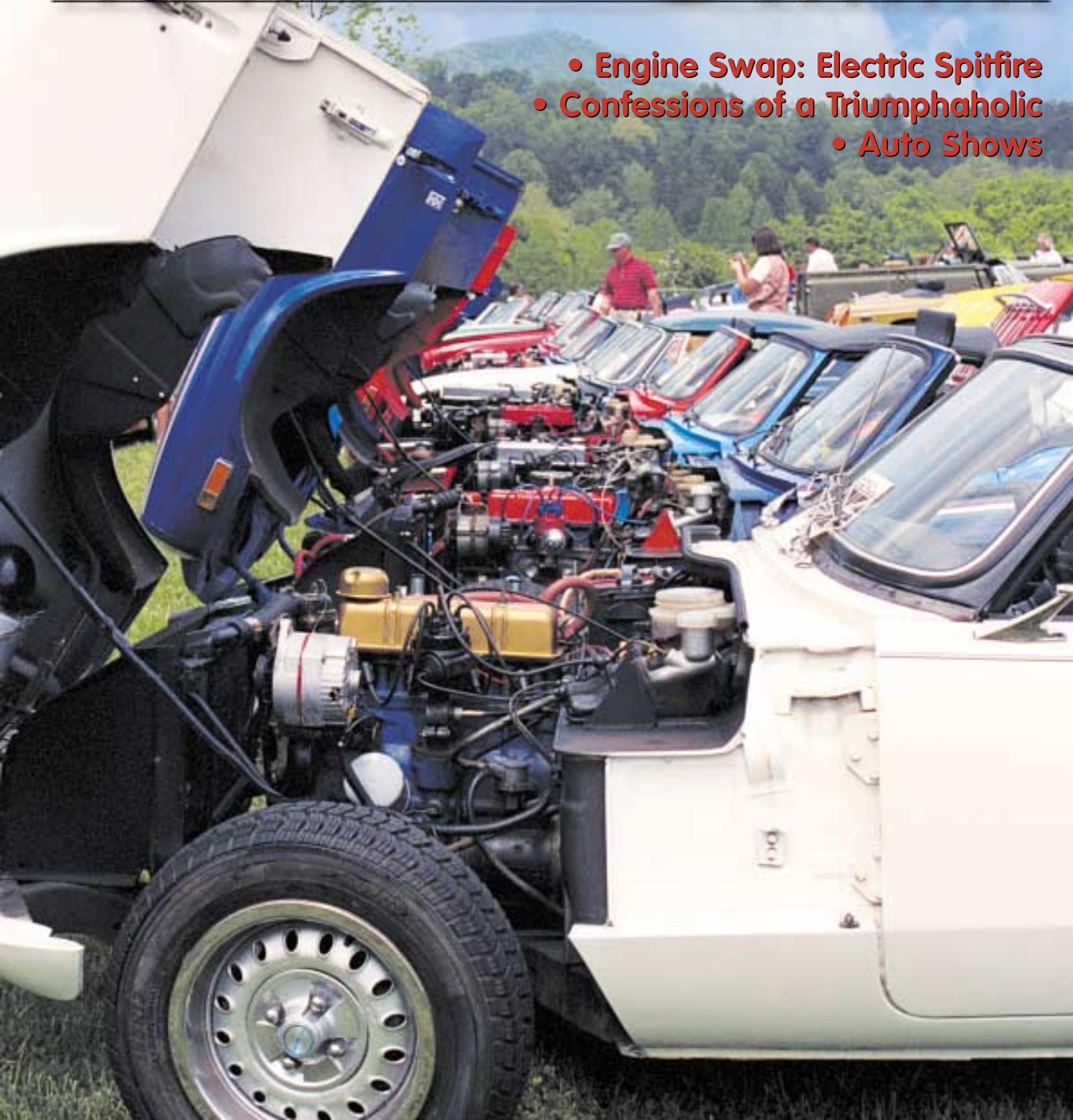


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from the editor

What a great

time to own a Triumph! There are more clubs than ever. Parts suppliers have almost anything we need at reasonable prices. There are hundreds of web sites with

more information that you could ever read. And the media is now beginning to realize what we have always known; Spitfires and GT6's really do have value. Even we owners are starting to recognize that they may have more value than we believed, especially the under-appreciated GT6. All three car shows covered in the "Showing Off" section (Spitfire/GT6 Concours class) were won by GT6's! To win a concours, the owner must spend lots of time and money. It is great to see it being spent on GT6's.

This magazine is steadily growing with every issue. We are starting to get European subscribers which is encouraging. And the more readers, the more information we will be able to share. We want the magazine bigger, more informative, and nicer with every issue. We believe this is happening. So, if there is anything you would like to see or something that needs improvement let us know. We will be making the "Do It Yourself" section much bigger in the following editions. We have goals of making the magazine Spitfire and GT6 owners *MUST* have, like their workshop manuals or spare fuses.

I also need to thank the people who wrote stories for this issue especially the writers who wrote multiple stories and covered car shows. Keep the stories coming and good luck winning the GT6!

John Goethert
editor



Broken down again?
No, just moving my half-restored Spit to our new house. I thought it made a funny photo. Thanks Don for the tow.



SPITFIRE & GT6

MAGAZINE

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This magazine is in no way affiliated with Triumph, Spitfire, GT6 or BMW, although that would be nice!



To send information to Spitfire/GT6 Magazine: INFO@TRIUMPHSPITFIRE.COM or P.O. BOX 30806, KNOXVILLE, TN USA 37930-0806

Hi there,

My name's Stephan Sieburg and I'm a member of the Swiss Triumph Spitfire Club. I'm also the editor of our club magazine which is published twice a year. You sent us a copy of your magazine (#2) for which we thank you very much. We will show it to our members at the next occasion. I also intend to dedicate a page of our magazine to inform our members that your magazine exists, how it can be ordered and mentioning the address of your internet site which I find very informative. We would, however, appreciate if you could change our club address to: Postfach 920, 8501 Frauenfeld, Switzerland. Maybe you could also mention our internet site: www.spitfire.ch Thank you very much!

Best regards,
Stephan
info@spitfire.ch

A Great Magazine! I have a '75 Spitfire 1500. I'm in the middle of replacing the clutch slave cylinder and couldn't figure out how to get to it. The article was very timely. Also have a black walnut dash I made myself from local wood. Can't get finish just right yet.

Keep up the excellent quality of the magazine!

Best Regards,
Mike Opaleush

Hello,

After finding your website and looking around, I decided to subscribe to your publication. Also, like any other proud Triumph owner, I thought that it would be nice to see my car in the magazine. I have done quite a bit of work to it and it gets looks and comments from most people who see it, even those

who don't know what it is. Here are some of the vitals: 1974 Triumph Spitfire 1500
Commission # FM
19756U Rebuilt motor, suspension,

full new interior, new paint, top, dual exhaust, 4-2-1 header, rollbar, overdrive transmission, entire car has been gone over extensively. Drives and handles like new.

I look forward to receiving the magazine and also possibly seeing my car on it's pages.

Thanks & happy motoring
Brian Di Dio
Mansfield, Ohio

Dear John.

We are very grateful for the information that you have sent us, they are of a lot of utility for our work in the club.

If we can please help you, in something you make it know.

Greetings,
Njurka Viera
Habana, Cuba

Hi John,

Well GT6.COM is finally back in operation. Unfortunately I haven't had a chance to get to writing an article, my girlfriend keeps on finding more pressing tasks around the house. I am trying though.

I have however received my copies of Issues 1 & 2. Outstanding work, glad I subscribed!

Regards,
Todd Wilson
Australia

My name is Magdalena, and I'm from Argentina. I really would like to write about my

Spitfire.

We bought it last year, I think, and my father is keeping better, because we are participating for many races.

I hope you can understand me, because my English isn't very good. I will write you another mail to tell you more about my old car.

OHHHHH!!!, we have a Mini Cooper too.

See you, I can't write it today, maybe next week.
Magdalena Ferro

Bonjour !!

Je suis ravie de trouver un site pareille sur les spitfires, j'aurais juste voulu savoir si vous aviez l'intention de faire une version française de votre magazine qui m'a l'air tres interessant.

Merci de votre réponse cordialement.

Morgane Deléger
France

Fantastic job on your magazine! I just love it. So, congratulations to you all!

Allan Dunphy
London Ontario, Canada
Hi,

I would like to see an article which compares the Spitfire to some of its rivals, such as the Healey Sprite and the MGB. Obviously one that says how much better the Spit is.

Just an idea,
Tim Lane
via email

Hi!

Thank you so much for all the exposure in the second issue! I was VERY surprised! I did have one correction, though -- the pictures you featured of the green Spit with the pumpkins and with the yellow Stearman airplane are actually mine, of my '68 Spit Elliott, and not Laura Gharazeddine's (although her car Nigel is a cutie, too!). Ooops!

I am attaching a shot of me driving Tristan at the SCCA Solo II National Tour held at the Texas Motor Speedway April 15 and 16. I competed in D Modified and Tristan ran very well, but unfortunately I had forgotten to change the rear end out from the

road race gears to the autocross gears due to trying to get everything else ready, and came in dead last! But I was very pleased with my work on Tristan and now have a list of things to tweak, now I am over the major hurdles! Wheeee!!!!

Thank you so much for a great magazine!

Keep Triumphing,
Susan Hensley :)

Hey Thanks!

I subscribed to your magazine only last week and have already received the first two issues. Amazing!!

Keep up the good work.

Best Regards,
Graeme Mawson

I was checking out the triumphspitfire.com web site and saw that I could send you a jpeg file of my '78 Spitfire 1500. I just acquired it, have done a little work to it and I'm very proud. It has been completely restored and is equipped with a Weber carb, tuned exhaust, oil cooling system and a roll bar. Just to see it on the web site would make my day!

Thank you for you time,
Amos Rogers
tlsacr@flash.net
Thornton, CO

Hi John,

Shooting a quick note your way- If you readers are interested in a Modified car for Hillclimb/Autocross work, that's what I'm building. The car is projected to be ready towards the end of the current autocross season. I'm planing to(hopefully) drive or tow the car to Portland,Ore. for the VTR 2000. A link to what the car looks like & the work within can be found at: <http://members.aol.com/danmas/v8spit.htm> .

Dan runs a good site for Mod cars & includes the Pros & Cons of conversion. Side Note: My car IS NOT American Powered! I've been a British Auto Tech for over 25 yrs. & still think that "if it's British-It should STAY that Way!!!"
Dean Loros
via email

John,

Your magazine is great. Thanks for the opportunity. I would be glad to contribute in the future.

Keep up the good work.
Dave West (The Beast)
via email

Hello:

I am delighted to be able to inform you that you now are the proud owner of a magazine that covers all 50 states! If your editorial comment was correctly read (and by the way, your apology is accepted) it would indicate that now there is at least one copy of your magazine now winging its way into Green Mountain country on a hopefully regular basis!

With all the "Eyah's" and spitting that daily occurs in this state, I am astonished that this perfectly named vehicle has not found a larger foothold. Although tempted to get vanity plates that simply read "LOOGIE",

I managed to restrain myself and now am in desperate practice to perfect the careful art of being a Vermonter in an English convertible. It is, as you might imagine, a messy but vital skill to 'get right'! (A bit like a Zenith-Stromberg carb perhaps?)

Regards and thanks for an excellent mag!
Tim Twinam
Vermont

I ordered a t-shirt from the TriumphSpitfire.com site in early Jan. On or about January 15, I found out that the attorney that I work for was leaving the law firm, to merge his practice with a new law firm. Since I was going with him to the new firm, I was excited about the upcoming move and forgot about the t-shirt. We moved to our new firm on February 1. After a few days of settling in, I remembered that I had ordered a t-shirt and still hadn't received it. I called TriumphSpitfire.com to find out where my shirt was. Tom told me that it had been delivered and signed for at the old firm, the week BEFORE we left that firm. I called over

there, thinking that it had been put in the human resource director's office and forgotten (innocent scenario). No such luck...no one knew where the shirt was, but everyone put forth the idea that the office manager, who was out that day, had it. When the office manager showed up the next day, she claimed that the managing partner of the firm, had given her the shirt and she had taken it home, thinking it was a free-bie. Her story was that the managing partner, a reasonably intelligent attorney, had opened the package from TriumphSpitfire.com, THROWN away all of the paperwork and packaging, then, not knowing who the t-shirt belonged to and with no way to figure out who the t-shirt

belonged to, passed it on to her. (Am I the only one who sees something WRONG with that scenario? An attorney, who normally frets about the smallest of details, would throw away the invoices and packaging, THEN try to figure out who the merchandise belongs to???) I told her flat out that I thought she was stretching the truth and would like payment for the shirt. She refused, stating that I took the risk of having something delivered to the firm's address and that the firm had never guaranteed that anything delivered to the firm would actually make it to the intended recipient. (At this point, Tom broke this near-stalemate by offering to give me another shirt and made the comment that TriumphSpitfire.com's merchandise is so good that it's understandable for her to have resorted to appropriating someone else's shirt in order to get one.) There is a great deal of behind-the-scenes office politics in this story that I haven't told you: for one thing, The office

manager once owned a Spitfire; her husband races MGs and Spits; and she had personal knowledge that I currently own a Spitfire, however, there was some "tension" on her part whenever I was involved. (Something I did? I don't know.) Another thing, I made a statement above that everyone in the office put forth the idea that she had taken the shirt; this is true, many members of the staff said this and the idea is supported by the fact that she will "redirect" holiday gifts and presents intended for all the members of the firm. She will either take the gifts home and distribute them to her family, or rewrap the item and send it out to clients! So, in the end, no one was surprised when it came out that she had the shirt and had refused to pay for it. The staff members at the old law firm are, however,

concerned about the statement that anything delivered to the firm is not guaranteed to make it to the intended recipient. This is now the "infamous t-shirt incident" and garners a chuckle when mentioned. I received the t-shirt Tom promised me and I agree that TriumphSpitfire.com's stuff is good enough to want to steal, I mean, "appropriate"! Everyone who sees it says that it looks great!

Thanks,
Name withheld upon request

Thank you for your great (classifieds) service. I sold my car in NorthWest (ad #67) in only 10 days.
Thanks again,
Jay Weinblatt
via email ■



Wouldn't it be nice if...

Hi,

I would like to see an article which compares the spitfire to some of its rivals, such as the Healey Sprite and the MGB. Obviously one that says how much better the Spit is.

Also. Your verdict on what is the closest thing to the Spitfire in production today.

Just an idea.

Tim Lane

(The Magazine's) great! All the power info was terrific. Your articles filled in a lot of the information that is missing from the websites. Websites are all well and good, but, I enjoy a well-done magazine. I would only suggest more how-tos which are, of course, popular. Dash re-do's, top installation, firewall refinishing, etc., etc. (Fortunately for you there's a long list.)

My only criticism would be there were a lot of typos, but that certainly didn't detract from the enjoyment of the issue

Thanks again!

Tom Burke

Is it possible to create a sort of database of parts interchangeability for Spitfires/GT6's? Or maybe just a brief article in the magazine? I'm restoring a '64 Mk1 and I just bought a GT6/spit hybrid (from an ad in your magazine) to restore and I was wondering what parts are interchangeable between the different years of Spitfires. For example, do all bonnets fit with all body tubs? Do different engines just bolt right in on different models? What doors will fit my '64 MK1??? Etc....
Mike Cousins
New Orleans, LA

Let us know what you think.

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- Guide to Originality** by John Thomason for Triumph Spitfire & GT6; 160 pgs, hardcover \$ 35
- Triumph Spitfire** by Michael Cook. Covering Triumph Spitfire & GT6 history; 144 pgs, \$ 22
- 62-81 Spitfire Haynes Manual** \$ 17
- 62-80 Spitfire portfolio**; 180 pgs of articles compiled in book form by Brooklands \$ 23
- 71-75 Parts Catalogue** Factory Approved for Spitfire Mk. IV and 1500 \$ 16
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- 75-80 Spitfire 1500 Official Repair Operation Manual** 216 pgs. \$ 38
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- Restoration: Practical Classics & Car Restorer** on Triumph Spitfire Restoration. 80 pages \$ 12
- Mk3 Parts Manual** Factory Official 224 pages \$ 38
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- 1500 Owners Manual** for Triumph Spitfire \$ 11
- Competition Preparation Manual** by Triumph for all Spitfires MK1-1500; 64 pgs. \$ 11
- Mk1-3 Official Workshop Manual**, 272 pages incl Herald & Vitesse. \$ 38
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Triumph GT6 and Vitesse Owners Workshop Manual

By Haynes Publishing, 227 pages, \$30, £18



A great resource, this hard cover manual deals with maintenance and troubleshooting of GT6 M1-3 and Vitesse automobiles.

I can't imagine owning a Triumph and not having a Haynes Manual. It describes in detail the dismantling and rebuilding of all areas of the car. Interestingly, it seems to be written in an earlier time compared to the Spitfire manual even though its copyright date is 1982. It discusses repairs in an "old-fashioned" way. It's like talking to an old English mechanic. For instance, it describes a method for synchronizing the carbs using a hose to your ear to compare the hiss of the carbs. While the Spitfire manual mentions some of the old methods, it often tells of "special service tools" required for working on the car that aren't mentioned in the GT6 manual.

I thing I really like about the manual is at the end of every chapter there is a troubleshooting chart describing symptoms and possible causes. Although it doesn't list EVERY solution to a problem, it does list major causes and in the order they should be checked. For example, for a spongy brake pedal it recommends to bleed the system first. It saves a lot of time for over-enthusiastic beginners that would automatically start rebuilding the master cylinder.

As I've already stated above, if you own Triumph, you must have a Haynes Manual. ■

The Triumph Spitfire

By Michael Cook, 144 pages, \$22, £14



This soft-bound, "dime novel" sized book was the first Spitfire book I ever owned; it was floating around in the "boot" of my Spitfire. Being a new owner I read it from cover to cover many times. It was my bible.

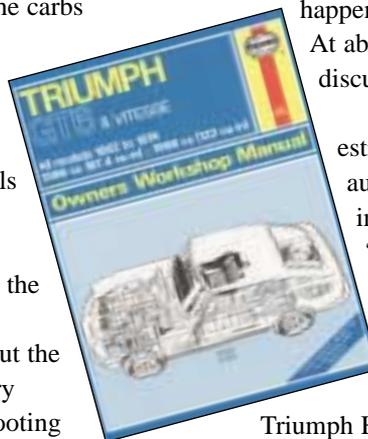
It tells the history of the Spitfire (and GT6s) models. It starts out discussing the Spitfire's predecessors and the Herald's influence on the car. Next, the book talks of its introduction to the public and media exposure.

Then the book works its way into describing the car and the changes that happen through out its run. At about 1969, the book discusses changes by year.

There are many interesting stories as the author is a Triumph insider. He tells of "flying" through New York City trying to deliver the FIRST Spitfire in the US to the Standard

Triumph Headquarters. And of dock strikes that left the company scrambling to get cars to showings. There is even the story about how the Spitfire name was traded to Triumph from an airplane company for use of their Vanguard name.

The history is interesting but the information about specific cars is not as detailed as other books we have reviewed, just a general overview. A good book but for Triumph book collections but not as an owner's only Spitfire book especially at the price. ■



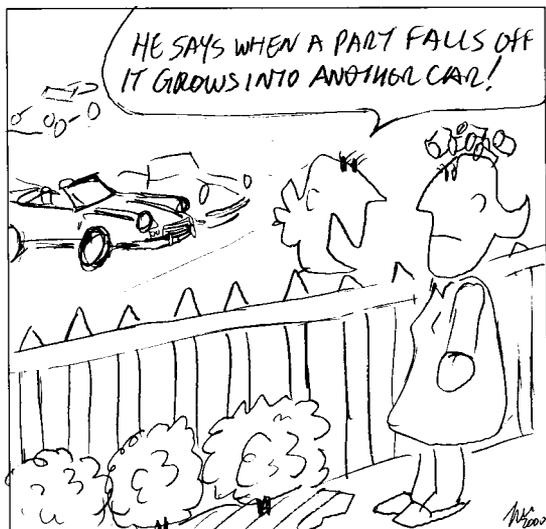


SPITFIRE & GT6 POST CARDS

Recently the film for these postcards has been discovered making it possible to reprint these wonderful cards. They are currently available through the major vendors or on the triumphspitfire.com web site.

NORTH AMERICAN SPITFIRE CLUB FORMATION UPDATE

In the last issue of Spitfire/GT6 magazine we announced the formation of a new club for Spitfire & GT6 enthusiasts. The wait may be over soon. The North American Spitfire Squadron is still in the process of being formed but will probably be official before the fall. They have set up a email service and Bulletin Board that will keep members informed about upcoming events and news. Visit <http://www.egroups.com/list/nass/info.html> for more information. Although they are currently only working online, hopefully by the next issue, we will be able to tell you where to write to join and maybe inform you of their first event.



SPITFIRE ALE

Although not available here in the US, England has known about Spitfire Ale for a while. I have been told it tastes pretty good but is usually served warm because the refrigerators are made by Lucus!

Visit www.shepherd-neame.com.uk for the official web page.

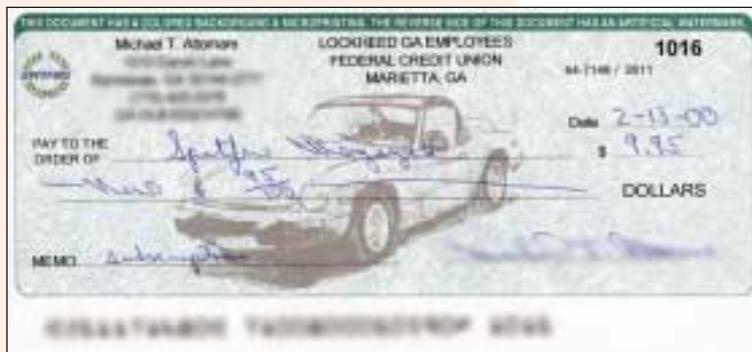
SPITFIRE AUCTION?

Jeff McNeal has started building an auction website to sell Spitfire and Triumph items and cars. Good luck Jeff. It can be viewed at www.ohms.com/cgi-bin/TRauction.cgi While you are there, visit the rest of Jeff's excellent Spitfire Mk3 site. ■

Cool Checks

Due to many requests for info about the Spitfire checks mentioned in the last issue, I contacted Michael about them. He responded:

John,
I could not find any company that made British car checks, so I decided to design and print my own. I used a drawing of my car that an artist out in Reno, Nevada did for me, and inserted it into a custom check making program that I bought for my computer. I even double checked the program's claim that the checks are 100% legal by having my bank (credit union) inspect them for me. My wife says I should sell them since there are other people out there like me who would like them. I showed them to the members of the car club that I am a member of (The Georgia Triumph Association) - the TR6 guys were jealous!
Michael Altomare
'77 Spitfire 1500



Spitfire Spotters



In the June 26 edition of People Magazine there is a small interview with Nicolas Cage about his first car; a Triumph Spitfire. It says he recently bought the same car again. Does anyone know who sold it back to him? It might make an interesting story.

A "trailer" for the Beatles movie "HELP" shows the Fab Four driving Spitfires on the beach. It is included at the end of the video cassette of the movie, along with other promotional video.



Some of the UK subscribers may have seen the TV program "The Grimley's" where the main character, Brian Conley alias Dynamo Digby, drives around in a Mk3 Spitfire. The Spitfire in the show is owned by Des Whelehan. We have heard he works for the TV production company and gets £50 a day for filming. He has used this additional income to buy parts.



The past quarter has been good for Spitfires in magazines. *British Car* (June-July 2000) features a story about the most complete surviving Factory LeMans Spitfire. *Practical Classics* (May 2000) does one of their famous "Buyers Guide" features about the Spitfire. Both are great stories, full of information and should be able to be purchased as back issues. Also, thank you *Practical Classics* for mentioning TriumphSpitfire.com!

My *Classic Car* television show, produced by *Hemmings Motor News* magazine, named the Spitfire to its "Top Ten Overlooked Classics" list.

Hemmings Motor News has announced its 12th annual top ten picks for overlooked collector cars, chosen for their potential future appreciation in the collector marketplace. This year's top ten includes:

1. 1962-64 Austin-Healey Springetts and/or Mark I MG Midgets
2. 1968-76 BMW 2002's
3. 1983-85 Buick Regal T-Type coupes
4. 1951-54 DeSoto V8s
5. 1963-66 Dodge Dart GT convertibles and hardtops
6. 1968-70 Ford Torino GTs
7. 1966-68 Ford Broncos
8. 1969-71 Lincoln Continental Mk IIIs
9. 1964-66 Pontiac Tempest 326 hardtops and convertibles
10. 1962-67 Triumph Spitfire Mark I's and Mark II's

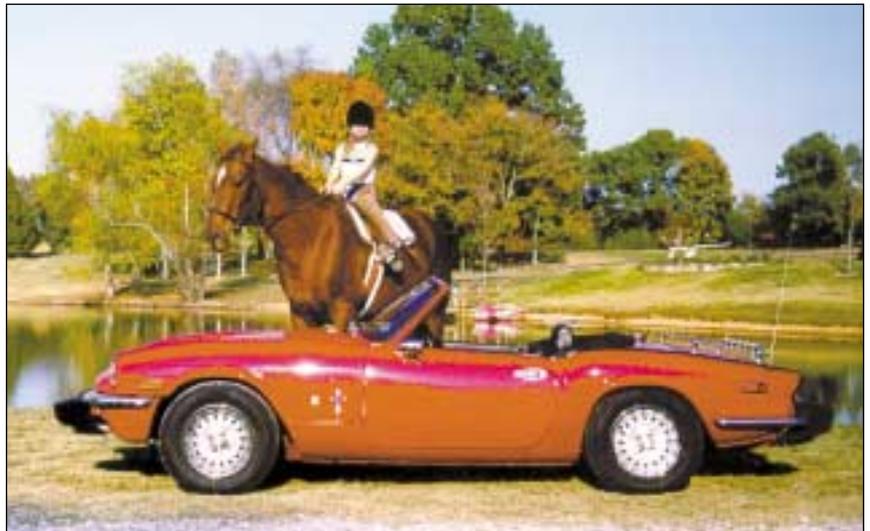




Norbert Schumann, Moerfelden, Germany, 1969 Mk3



Dario Gambino, Palermo, Italy, 1500



Brittany (daughter of Rick Stieg), Tennessee, USA, 1975 1500



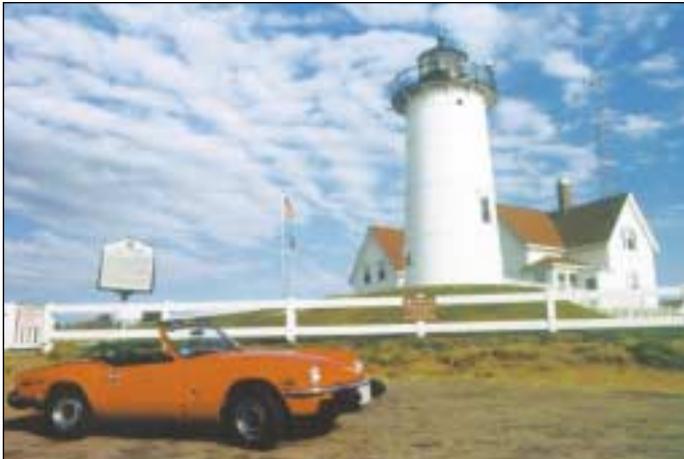
Laura Gharazeddine, California, USA, 1977 1500



Pete Gilbert, California, USA, 1970 Mk3

To have your car featured in next issue and on the triumphspitfire.com website, e-mail us at info@triumphspitfire.com

Reader's Cars



Brian Nickerson, Massachusetts, USA, 1974 Mk4



Niurka Viera, Habana, Cuba, 1979 1500



Jeff Carter, Massachusetts, USA, 1978 1500



Susan Hensley, Texas, USA, 1968 Mk3



Amos Rogers, Colorado, USA, 1978 1500





Jon-Carlo (son of Mauricio Escobar), Florida, USA, 1980 1500

Howard & Ginny Baugues, Indiana USA, 1976 1500



Allan Dunphy, London Ontario, Canada, 1976 1500



Brian & Leslie Di Dio, Ohio, USA, 1974 1500





You Can Go Home Again

OWNED BY THOR SVABOE, PHOTOS BY STEPHEN FOLDE

I have just moved back to Norway, after working for six years in England. Obviously, I couldn't move back here without something I've wanted for years, an English sports car, a Triumph of course. I looked at some Spitfires, but going to Norway I had to take the weather into account. Also, I just had to have one with that straight six engine.

A project GT6 Mk2 was found at Triumph Spares in Worcestershire in England, and after I managed to get my finances sorted out, with help from the best mom ever, they got started on a rebuild.

But, when the car was finally finished, it did

not want to leave the good people who restored her.

First time, I got nearly all the way to my house, when one of the carbs conked out on me. Back down to get it fixed. Next time, I got home, but going to work the next day, the other carb flooded, spraying fuel into the engine bay, as I was stuck in the rush hour traffic. Back again. The very helpful Bob fixed it again, and I was on my way home, when the speedo cable snapped. It was now two weeks before my ferry left for Norway so I decided to leave the GT6 with Bob as most of you know it's a big job changing the cable, with carpets and gearbox tunnel coming



out. Obviously none of these jobs are very big, but as my last car was a clapped out Ford; my Triumph knowledge was still a bit limited.

This last job was finished 1 day before my 4 hour drive up from Birmingham to Newcastle to take the ferry to Norway, and to say I was a bit nervous is the understatement of the year. On my way up there, I caught up to the Mini Marcos Register, as they were taking the same ferry, going to Finland for a Mini meet. Needless to say my Triumph, now in fine form, was a bit quicker than them on the motorway and I got to the ferry a good 20 minutes before them.

So everything had gone well, finally, 420 miles and not one little problem. Well maybe one problem. When I started her up inside the ferry the morning after, the accelerator cable had

gotten squashed, and it was stuck full on! Very entertaining, with that sports twin exhaust screaming (WHAAAAAAAAAAAA !!) and me jumping out of the car trying to get the hood open, with 2 inches between all the cars.

On my first drive around Oslo back in Norway, this couple were looking at my parked Triumph very closely, and I understood why as I heard a familiar exhaust note 10 minutes later. They had a GT6!, the same year as mine, also red, and they only knew of one more in Norway! How strange is that....?

Thor Svaboe,
Rykkinn, Norway
thor@expo-nova.no ■

1970 Mk2 GT6 Signal red

- 2 litre engine with overdrive
- Electronic ignition
- oil filter adapter and extra oil feed to cam, via stainless steel braided hose
- Magnecor competition ignition leads
- high power coil.
- Stainless steel extractor manifold and twin box exhaust also fitted, which sounds fantastic and gives a bit extra poke.
- K&N Air filters soon
- wheels to the original spec. with rostyle wheel trims, but with 165 tires on for better grip.

GT6: A Triumph Treasure

BY SUE SNYDER

My love affair with Triumphs began in 1968, when my girlfriend purchased a cute, but well-used, Mark I Spitfire. The car was pretty rough, but it was BRG, topless and we were 18 and ready for adventure. The best part of this whole situation was that my friend Judy didn't know how to drive a stick and I did! So, I got to do all the driving until she mastered the fine art of three pedal driving. On the downside, I also had to act as Judy's driving instructor - wow, you couldn't pay me enough to do that again!

At any rate, we put about a zillion and one miles on that little Spit before our lack of mechanical knowledge (and the funds to pay for someone else's) put an end to our carefree cruising days. Ah well, back to the serious life of a college student and study. We were both sophomores at Wayne State (or as we prefer to call it: Waste Crate) University in the heart of beautiful Detroit. Yes folks, at that time Detroit still had lots to offer, and was a relatively safe place to be! We decided to hit the books and boost those grade points, while working at part-time jobs, and not totally giving up our social life. The only thing I gave up at that time was the job part of the trio.

Two years to go until graduation turned into three, with a year long hiatus for marriage and a family, but eventually I did earn my degree and was even lucky enough to land a full-time teaching position - a very scarce commodity in 1971. Oh, the future was looking bright, but wait. If my husband and I both have full-time teaching jobs on opposite sides of town.. why, I'm going to need my own car! Sharing a 1967 pea green Plymouth Satellite just isn't gonna cut it. Hmmm.let's see. what kind of car can I afford to buy? Why, I know! A Spitfire - what else?

Well there you have it. My very first new car was a 1971 Maple Spitfire Mk IV, and true to its drab brown colour, it was one s__ty car! (Please pardon my expletive!) This Triumph was a total lemon. It should have been painted yellow. In the short eleven months I was able to tolerate the car, it spent at least three months in the shop being repaired! One new rear spring, a new clutch, two

coils, an electrical fire, and a couple of other breakdowns later, I decided the Spitfire had to go - and don't even ask about Lucas, the Prince of Darkness! Still, I was saddened to think that I would no longer be spinning back and forth between home and school in a jaunty little British car, until I spotted the shiny white GT6 Mk3 sitting in the dealer showroom. Love at first sight! But could I afford the car. Wow, \$3300 was a whole lot of moolah on a teacher's starting salary. And besides, the Spitfire was such a bust, should I take the chance on another Triumph? Anyway, it's not really a very practical car for a family with a small child. Oh what the heck, I really like this car. I just have to have it! What's another payment book among friends and family (thanks Grandma & Grandpa for making it happen.)

So I took the chance on another Triumph, and the next five years were motoring bliss. My husband Dave began referring to me as "Parnelli" and I began to notice a whitish colour around the knuckles of his tightly clasped hands whenever he rode with me. It was great! I was (and still am) pretty much a speed freak, and I dearly loved to take a corner in the 40 MPH range. Remember everyone: a chirping tire is a happy tire! I learned that a racing school, and I do have a competition license, but that's a whole other story.

Unfortunately, all that Indy style driving, combined with some nasty Michigan winters and road salt, took their toll on the GT6. By the summer of '77, the car was in need of a major overhaul. It needed wheel bearings, springs, clutch, second gear, plus there was some serious rust beginning to develop in all the usual places. I'd already painted the car two years previously in an attempt to stave off the inevitable rot in the rockers and above the windscreen. It didn't work! The floor was getting some soft spots, too. What to do, what to do? Should I fix the car or get another? At this juncture, replacement seemed like a much better option, so I put in my order for a new Spitfire 1500, this time with a hard top to fend off the cold temperatures in January and February. Some time passed (three months to be

exact,) and the Spitfire finally arrived, but alas, sans hard top. How disappointing! Upon the advice of my dealer, that the paint on any top shipped separately would not be a good match, I refused the car and put in another order. Another couple of months passed, and again, the Spitfire was delivered without a hard top. Argh!! No way am I going to wait for another, and now that I've really looked at the Inca yellow and those Hounds' tooth seats, I'm not sure I want this Spitfire either.

The dealer, seeing my frustration, suggested that I might be interested in - dare I say it - an MG! There were plenty available to choose from right on the lot. He handed me the keys to his MGB and told me to take it out for a drive and see how I liked it. Well, I have to admit, I liked it enough to buy a good looking white B with bold black side stripes. I must say there was no comparison with the comfort level between the MGB and the GT6. The MG was a much more "cushy" and smooth ride, and it had lots more interior space for the driver and passenger.

The 1977 MGB was my daily driver for the next three years, until June of 1980, when I learned that British Leyland had stopped production. My dealer had only two MGs left on his lot, both the LE model, and he indicated he was not able to acquire any more stock. He had no Spitfires left in his inventory and only one or two TR7s. Once again I was presented with a somewhat difficult decision. The TR7 definitely did not appeal to me. The Special Edition MGB, on the other hand, was quite an attractive vehicle, black on black with a limited edition silver side stripe, luggage rack, and special alloy five-spoke wheels. The absence of any Spitfires in the picture did help me make my decision to put my hands on one of the last available MGBs to be built by British Leyland. Once again, however, financing was going to be a problem. In fact, I still owed the bank several payments for the '77 B. However, knowing how much I loved these little British cars, and that this would definitely be my last chance to get a new one, my husband Dave managed (with a lot of creative budgeting) to figure out how we could manage the payments on one last new British car.

So, in June of 1980, I became the very excited and proud owner of an MGB Limited Edition model (which I am still driving today,

and recently drove from Michigan to Townsend, TN for the 13th British Car Gathering.) For the next five years, The LE was my daily driver, and proved itself many times over. Michigan winters were no problem for handling and control. Of course, the GT6 was equally able to handle adverse weather and road conditions, and there was never a lack of heat! Once again, I was quite happy with my current "wheels." I really enjoyed driving both of the MGBs, but always in the back of my mind, I would compare their performance to the GT6. I did miss the quickness and agility of the GT that the MGs could never quite match. The GT6 definitely had a "racier" feel. My 1972 Triumph GT6 is the only car I have ever regretted giving up. I was always sorry I hadn't been able to afford the overhaul it needed. It would have been nice to have stored the car for a future project, but it just wasn't possible. Those days would come much later.

In 1985, my faithful MGB was beginning to show the same signs of decline as the GT6 had several years earlier. Being more financially comfortable now, I decided to get another daily driver and save the MG for "good weather" driving. Enter the world of pick-up trucks. Yep, it's all too true. I went from a British-only girl to a truck-drivin' woman! What a change. I still liked to drive like an Indy racer,



but I have to tell you, a pick-up is no match for a GT6 or even an MG. Cornering speeds are more in the 10 to 20 MPH range. Now I really missed my good old GT6! There just isn't another vehicle of any kind that drives like a Triumph GT.

Well, time marched on to 1992, and in spite of my pleasure with the MG, I still missed the thrill of jetting about in a GT6. Then one cool, Fall day, my brother-in-law (himself a Triumph man) stopped by to say he had seen an ad in the paper for a '73 GT6, and knowing that I still wished I had one, thought I might like to look at it. Now, I'd been thinking for a quite some time that I'd try to find my original '72 and get it back, but I figured it wouldn't hurt to go have a look at this one. So, convincing my husband that I was just looking, we decided to go see the car.

After calling the guy who was selling the car and convincing him that I really did know what a GT6 was, and yes, I knew it wasn't a convertible, and I was really interested, he agreed to meet me at his in-laws' place, where the car was stored. I really don't think he wanted to sell the car, as his asking price was a bit high, but his wife had given him the word! Well, the engine bay looked pretty rough and we had a devil of a time getting it started (bad alternator.) There were some other mechanical problems - all repairable - and the interior was totaled, but the car had just been painted (and a pretty darn good spray job) the correct shade of Valencia Blue. It was gorgeous. Not being able to start the car was a major downer, but sitting behind the wheel, remembering all those high speed corners and all of those happy chirping tires, I was seriously considering buying this GT6. On the other hand, I had never owned a "used" Triumph (or a used anything else for that matter.) What might I be getting into? After lots of discussion with my husband and brother-in-law, who had had many used Triumphs, I decided to take the plunge and commit to buying this '73 GT6.

Oh boy, what a deal! Six months and about nine grand later, I had a respectable, good-running car. With lots of TLC and elbow grease, the engine bay cleaned up nicely, and although not quite to original specs, it now looked pretty good. The interior was completely redone, including the unusual, but optionally correct black head liner. A no-lead head made running a bit smoother, and a stainless steel exhaust still sounded like a real Triumph. Best of all was the driving, and the

newly discovered excitement of autocrossing! I have to admit, I never realized dodging around a bunch of orange traffic cones in an empty parking lot could be so much fun.

Since getting the GT6 in 1992, I've put an additional 11,650 miles to the 46,040 that were on the car. And even though this GT6 isn't as fast as I remember the '72 being (more emissions controls,) I've loved every one of those miles. Yes, I'm older and supposedly wiser, but corners are still fun at forty MPH, and my tires are still chirping away. Dave and I have become enthusiastic attendees at many shows around the Eastern U.S. and Canada since we got the GT6, and often drive both our British cars to various events. Our participation in car shows has led to our becoming very active in our local club, the Detroit Triumph Sports car Club. In fact, we are both current officers of the DTSC, Dave as president and myself as secretary. For the past four years, I have also acted the chairman of our club's biggest event of the year, the Annual Battle of the Brits, and I plan on continuing to oversee this show for several more years. I really hope many of you will be able to attend this year's Battle, as we always have a good showing of Spitfires and GT6s. I think it's one of the best shows in the country and I'm working hard to make it better every year. (OK, enough advertising - back to my story.)

At the end of the 2000 driving season, in late September for me, the GT6 will undergo a complete frame-off restoration. At this time, an overdrive transmission will become part of my nifty little British car, and then it will be nothing but smooth sailing down the highway. Of course the change in gear ratio may slow my autocross times a bit, but the lower revving quiet on the highway will be worth it. The colour of the GT will remain Valencia Blue, and the engine bay will be redone to all the correct specifications. I just hope this project can be completed before the start of the 2001 season. I just hate the thought of missing out on any seat time in the Triumph. Even though I'll still have the MGB to run around in, there is nothing that can compare to the fun of driving a GT6, except maybe driving another GT6 - you just gotta love this car! This time there'll be no regrets. That's the reason for investing the time and money in the restoration. This GT6 is a KEEPER! ■

Old Miata

BY JEREMY WHITEHEAD



I purchased my bright red, '66 MK II spitfire off of Ebay about a month ago. Recently, I was finally able to bring it home and start enjoying it. To begin with, I noticed the Ebay ad and remembering back to a couple of years ago when I had a white '79 spitfire 1500, I thought I might ask the seller a couple of questions about since he only lived about 40 miles from where I grew up in Indiana. I'm now living near Atlanta, Georgia but my parents are still up there and my dad's an old car guy from the olden days. He still owns his original 1926 Buick and has forgotten more about old cars than I'll ever hope to know. I called dad and asked if he would mind driving down there and looking the car over for me. He said he would and I put him in touch with the seller to make arrangements for a meeting time. Dad called me at work the next day and reported that the car was in good running condition but needed a few minor things to be "right". After weighting the pro's and con's (including convincing my wife that I needed this new toy), I decided to go ahead and bid on it. During the bidding period, I started researching Spitfires and exchanged a few E-Mails with Joe Curry of the International Spitfire Database and

discovered that the car was actually a '65 titled in '66. Joe, being the truly nice fellow he is, shared with me that he is the owner of a '62 MK II that is titled as a '63 and his son has a '65 that's titled as a '66, same as mine. Well, to make a long story short, I won the auction by \$2

over the next highest bidder after a heart pounding last hour that involved going a tad higher than I had originally told myself I'd stop at. The car has been previously owned by a dentist, a high school principle and a church pastor and all totaled has only racked up 38,000 miles on it.

My father-in-law and I drove up to Indiana after a very forgettable experience with the local U-Haul dealer. The seller was quite friendly and he and his wife had owned the car for about 8 years. He nearly was in tears when we pulled away from the curb with the Spitfire in tow. The trip back was enjoyable and included a stop at a White Castle in Kentucky where I overheard some kid behind the counter comment, "Hey, look at that old Miata out there on a trailer". Naturally, I set him straight. We got numerous thumbs up and interesting glances at the car on the way home.

Once we got the car home and got it unloaded, my wife and I took a spin in it that ended up lasting 50 miles. I had this big old cheesy grin on my face the whole time (or so said my wife). Yesterday, I drove it to the local DMV and got historic car tags for it. Because the car was mistitled, I decided to take some printouts of



ers. If I ever get tired of just driving it and decide to totally redo the whole car, I'll probably return it to the correct color. Right now, plans are for a smaller steering wheel as the original wheel is way too big and hinders me getting in and out of the car. I'd also like to add a set of wire wheels to really dress it up a bit. The car isn't bad looking the way it sets, but like most 35 year old LBC's it's showing it's age and needs some minor work here and there.

The other evening I returned home from work and decided to take

what I had found off of Joe's website with me and see if I could get it corrected. To my surprise, the lady at the DMV was very impressed with the printouts and agreed that the car was a '65. She made the change for me without any hassle whatsoever and to



boot, started recounting her experiences she had in her youth with a Spitfire. She said she hadn't seen one in years and went over to the window to take a look at it in the parking lot. Naturally, I was as proud as a new father showing off my little girl.

Since purchasing the car, I have discovered that it was originally paint code 25 which was Conifer Green. You can still see a little of the green pain on the backside of the bonnet latches. Somewhere in the past 35 years, it got a coat of bright red paint and some aftermarket wheel cov-

the little Spit out for a spin in the North Georgia countryside. I typically avoid the State highways and stick to the little twisty, back country roads around my home. After seeing a few startled deer who quickly scampered off into the woods, I drove by a house where 3 boys were out playing in the yard. They immediately stopped and waived and I heard one yell "Nice Car!". I waived back and smiling to myself remembered that it wasn't all that long ago that I was that same little boy admiring the graceful lines of a Spitfire. ■

Smitten, Then Bitten by a GT6

BY KEN SHAPIRO

I swore I'd never bash knuckles on another car. In fact, after selling my last restoration project, a 1974 Lotus Europa Twin Cam, I bought a 1959 Fender Stratocaster guitar. My logic? It wouldn't rust, leak oil, or need my



weekly attention. After 30 years of playing with old cars, I was through. Besides, I have a 204 year old house and a four year old daughter; there was plenty to keep me busy.

Then I got "smitten" by a GT6. My wife, Beth, and I were watching the movie "The Spy Who Shagged Me", and a gold GT6 went cruising by in one scene. All logic went out the window. I turned to Beth and said, "Never had one of those...always wanted one." Although I'd never owned a Triumph, and in fact never desired any of the TR series, I'd toyed with the idea of buying an old Spitfire to turn into a street racer. I liked Spits looks but the stock four banger just never excited me enough. I never really looked too hard, and the examples I found were never rust free enough for me. The GT6 always intrigued me. I saw it as a kind of Spitfire muscle car, with the six cylinder stuffed into that lithe little body...so stuffed it required a functional hood bulge and cooling vents.

So, the day after the movie, I looked up Hemmings Motor News on the internet. I found two GT6s, one in Connecticut, and one in Arizona. A touch of sense came to me and I decided I'd wait until I'd found one closer to home. Years of restoration had taught me that the right car will come along at the right price if you're willing to wait.

Two days later, there was a GT6+ in the Baltimore Sun, about two miles from my house. It was basically rust free, and the two previous owners had done all of the mechanical restoration as well as new inner and outer sills and floors. At

\$2,300 I never even considered making a lower offer. I've checked the Sun every day for almost a year now. Not one more GT6 has shown up.

When I saw that GT6 in "Shag", I was "smitten". Now that I've driven, lived with,

and worked on "Big Red", I'm "bitten". She brings more smiles to my face than the 1964 Sting Ray, the Miata, the Lotus Europa, or the Porsche 914 I've owned in the past. Why? I could go on like a teenager in love...the low end torque, the nearly perfect gear ratios that provide great power delivery in every gear, and that incredible growl from the six through headers and a Monza free flow exhaust. She sounds much faster than she is, a factor that's probably saved me some tickets. It sounds juvenile for a 47 year old, but driving her under a tunnel is worth the price of the ongoing restoration and all the accompanying frustration. The handling of the GT6+ (a big improvement over the GT6 Mk1) is great, especially when you put some negative camber up front, and slap a set of Continental Contact 90s on the Minilites. There's enough oversteer to get the tail out on Maryland's twisty countryside roads without getting in over your head (Skip Barber graduate here). Sure, the Europa would stick longer, but when it did give, it went rather quickly. The GT6's steering is very quick with a small turning ratio.

For some insane reason (readers of this publication will understand), I love that oily, mildewed smell that only a LBC can provide. The Corvette didn't lose enough oil, and although the Lotus had that British characteristic, only the folks behind me could appreciate it (mid engine and all).

The GT6 has been called the "poor man's E type". I've owned both. Maybe I'm crazy, or maybe I'm just "Bitten"... I'll keep my GT6. ■



My GT6's History

BY DAVE LANGKAMP

My GT6 I bought in January of 1985. The car at that time was in very rough shape both inside and out. The body had been painted black and was in desperate need of a new paint job. The rocker panels were very rough along with the interior dash, which was also in desperate need of restoration as the lacquer finish was badly cracked. The car seats were incorrect, as they had head rests on them and I knew at that time that the 1967 model did not have seats of this type. The doors of the car were from a later model GT6 as the door handles were incorrect. The speedometer on the car also did not work, as did a number of other switches on the dash.

The first work I had done on the GT6 was to get the engine running smoothly and reliably. The transmission in the car also shifted poorly so this was the first items on my list of things to do. This was in 1985 that this work was completed so that I could at least drive the car and feel confident that it would not die and leave me stranded in the boonies someplace. In the following years I slowly corrected what I could on the car to make it more comfortable and more reliable. Changing tires, painting the spoked rims, getting a new dash installed and over time I collected the parts I knew I would need to complete the restoration on the

car. This included the correct seats, the correct doors, a rear window glass, a new front windshield, and a list of what seemed to be hundreds of miscellaneous bits, parts, and pieces.

The wood grain dash I pulled apart one winter and decided to refinish it to original condition. As I've said the lacquer was badly cracked so I thought I would strip it all off and start over again. After removing the dash I looked at the three separate pieces of wood and thought how nice it would be to have a new dash. I searched and called anyone and everyone I knew but without any luck of finding a new dash. I then thought that maybe I could get a new one made. I called a local pattern maker in town and arranged to meet with him one afternoon. I told him what I wanted to do

and he said "Sure, no problem. Just bring the dash over to my shop and we'll see what we can do." I quick ran over to his business and presented the beat up dash to him and told him it was out of my 1967 Triumph GT6. Jack (the pattern makers name) said, "Before we start I think you should see something first". I was a bit confused by all this as he led me though his office, then through his work shop filled with all kinds of pattern making machines and tools and finally ending up in the back warehouse of the shop. There sitting in a corner was the body of a 1959 MGTF painted in primer with the matching frame alongside it. Next to this were the engine and boxes and boxes of parts. He was another British car nut just like me! We traded stories of our cars and finally after an hour got back to his office to look at the dash I needed. Jack asked me what I wanted the dash made out of. I told him mahogany. A week later he handed me a perfect duplicate of the original dash. All the pieces were cut from one piece of lumber so the grain matched perfectly. The price for this piece of artwork came to a grand total of \$40. Talk about a deal! Jack had a new friend that day!

The next big installment toward the restoration

of my car happened years later when I decided to finally have the rocker panels replaced. My mechanic said "No problem! It'll only be a couple hundred bucks and we'll have it all fixed up for you!" This couple of hundred bucks escalated rapidly after Dan (my mechanic) had taken the old rockers off the car. There was nothing underneath the rocker panels to weld to after the years of rust had done its damage. Along with this another horrifying discovery was made. Whoever owned the car before me had found that the floor pan had also been badly rusted away. Instead of repairing the floor correctly they had decided to fiberglass a new floor in! This would not do. So now a new steel floor along with the rocker panels and the correct mounting hardware underneath the sheet metal was installed.

Again a few years more had passed and I collected more parts. I tracked down the correct seats for the car, the correct doors, an original air cleaner, and a new rear window glass for the hatch. The hatch had a defogger in the window. Again not correct for a 1967 GT6. The original seats that I had found were in really rough shape but the frames were usable. This again was the good news and like everything else so far it also came with bad news. The seat tracks that were in my car were for seats that had headrests and made possibly for a later model Spitfire. I tried to install the original seats but the tracks were incorrect. Again I had to do some hunting. I came across another owner of a GT6 in town (the car was a real basket case) that had the correct seats (an even worse basket case) but with the seat tracks I needed. I did some smooth talking and traded the guy my good seats (with headrests) and seat tracks for his basket case seats and seat tracks. He jumped at the chance and I now had the correct seat tracks for my car. Several weeks later the original seats were finally installed after having them beautifully restored by an upholsterer. Now I was one step closer to completing my dream car.

What started the final restoration of the car was a major breakdown of the engine on the very last day of a summer driving season almost three years ago. My brother and I had just finished cruising in the car for the last time for the year and

had filled the car up with gas to put it away for the season. We had driven only a couple blocks from the gas station when the car started running very poorly. I first thought it was bad gas that caused the problem but it wasn't until the following spring when I turned the car over to Dan my trusty mechanic that he diagnosed it as having blown a head gasket. Along with getting the engine rebuilt I asked Dan to repair some rust spots I had found on the rear quarter panels below the back bumpers. Also in the years that I have had the car I came across a design flaw in the Mark 1 model. The front bonnet has brackets designed that accidentally allow the bonnet to rest on the valve cover no matter how you adjust it. There was no clearance to allow the hood to clear the valve cover. This in turn caused a dent from the inside out on the hood of the car and had cracked the lacquer paint badly. In order to correct this problem I removed the original mounting brackets for the tilt mechanism on the bonnet and redesigned them to allow more clearance. This solved the denting problem and I directed Dan to repaint the nose of the car as well. Along with the engine repair work, now the car was being painted on the front end and on the back end as well as the top of the car in which the paint was badly cracked.

I was in Dan's shop one day and noticed that he had not planned on repainting the doors. We were going to repaint three-quarters of the car any-



way so now was the time to put the correct doors on the car too. Now the restoration snowball effect was starting to kick in. If we were going to paint the entire car it didn't make sense to pull off all the chrome and then put it back on without having it redone or replaced. So off went the various pieces to the metal shop to be redone. The front bumper and overrides were in desperate need of straightening and rebuilding and so this was done at the same time. The chroming shop was so swamped with orders for other customers that it would be another four months before I would get my bumpers back. The inner door panels on the original doors that I had stored for years in my basement were beyond being usable and had to be duplicated.



These like the seats were sent off to the upholsterers once again. In the meantime work had begun on the engine to get it running once again.

As I told you earlier in this article, the engine had blown a head gasket so now was the perfect time to rebuild the engine and convert it to run on unleaded gas without an additive by installing hardened valve guides and seats. Something I've wanted in the car for years. This went smoothly enough and the engine was declared finished at this point.

Now the bodywork was started and the rust spots underneath the rear bumpers on the quarter panels were next to be looked at. This like the rocker panels proved to be a bigger job than had been expected. Rust had taken its toll once again and now the quarter panels had to be replaced too. The paint that was on the car when I bought it was a black lacquer. This could not be paint over so it was decided it should be completely removed. This turned out to be another good and bad thing.

Good because now there would be only one color of paint on the car and bad because it was found that the lacquer was nearly impossible to remove. Stripping the car also showed that it had been painted at least three different colors before the black paint was applied. So at least now the body would be a lot smoother and cleaner with only one color on it. Once the stripping had been done, painting proved to be a task of nerves in itself as the different contours of the car truly tested my mechanic's painting ability. After two months of sanding old paint off and priming and sanding the prepared body, new paint was finally completed. Six coats of new paint were sprayed on the car to get it just right.

The original doors had to be straightened and prepared for a new coat of paint also. The driver's door had a remote control mirror installed in it from some American make of car and this was quickly removed and discarded. Several weeks passed before the doors had been restored to the correct shape and condition that seemed fit for the rest of the car. Again the doors like the body had at least six coats of new paint put on them. The doors were then set aside so that they would be the last thing put on the car.

The interior was removed and since the original seats had already been restored, they were removed and set aside for safe keeping. The entire interior was removed except the wood grain dash. The dash pad on top of the dash was also removed. Someone had tried to repair the badly cracked and broken dash pad by covering it with a sheet of black vinyl. I did a lot of searching on the Internet to track down a new dash pad but was only able to find a dash overlay. I had ordered one but it never fit correctly and so it was rejected and I returned it to the company I bought it from. I went back to my searching on the Internet for a new dash pad. After weeks of search I came to the conclusion that no one had a new dash pad for my car. I did come across a company in California though that did nothing but restore dashes for cars.

I called them up and explained to them exactly what I was doing and they said that they could redo my dash to like new condition. I asked them



at that time how they were able to bring a 33 year old dash back to like new condition if what I had was incorrect in the first place. I was informed that they had templates and forms to rebuild the dash to factory original specs. This sounded good to me and so I agreed to send my dash to them on the condition that they did not try to duplicate what I was sending them, as I knew it was incorrect. Keep this thought in mind and read on. They said “ No Problem! “ and that I would take ten weeks to get the dash pad redone and back to me. At this time it was the start of winter so I knew we were not going to be ready to get the car on the road any time soon. So off went my dash pad to California. In the weeks that past in waiting for the dash pad the new interior slowly started to take shape in the car. The floor of the car was covered with a thermal heat barrier like carpet. As anyone who drives a GT6 knows it can get hot driving one just because of the engine heat coming up through the floor. I thought this addition to the car was well worth the price. A new headliner was installed as the old one had a couple of holes in it and it had been dyed black. The original headliner for the Mark I was white so that was what was being put back in. A slow and tedious job but worth the effort. The old carpeting was torn out and again like so many other things with the car this was way overdue for

replacement. By this time this work was nearing completion the dash pad had arrived back from California. I hurriedly opened the box when it arrived at my home to find what looked to be a brand new dash pad.

Like so many things before this turned out to be another good news bad news story. We tried to install the dash pad into the car only to find it now no longer would fit! After Dan my mechanic had removed the windshield the dash would not drop into place as it was the wrong

shape and now there was a gap of over 1 1/2 inches between the dash and the dash pad. I immediately called the company in California explaining to them that the dash was not acceptable. After giving the owner a lecture for ten minutes about how I was now the owner of a \$300 doorstop I asked how they made the dash pad. They told me that they just duplicated what I had sent them. If ever there was a time that a heart attack should have taken place this was it.

Ten more minutes of lecturing the owner ended after he informed me that I should send the dash pad back to him in California and I would receive a prompt refund. I said that this was not acceptable, as now I would have no dash pad at all to put back into my GT6. I politely as I could told the owner that I would track down another dash pad that COULD be rebuilt and send both of them back to him to do so at his cost. He agreed to this and so I was once again back on the Internet searching for weeks for another dash pad. After about a month I came across one in Green Bay Wisconsin. This was promptly shipped to me and I took digital photos of the second dash pad and labeled what needed to be corrected on it and shipped it off once again to California. I called the owner of the dash pad company once again and informed him of what I had done and asked how long it would be this time to get the dash

rebuilt and back in my hands. The owner said two weeks. I wasn't about to hold my breath. Two weeks passed to the day when the UPS truck dropped off the familiar looking box from California. I opened the box and once again there was a new looking dash pad in my hands. I rushed the dash pad to my mechanic and we trial fitted it into the car. It looked like it should fit. The next day Dan called and said that the company had finally gotten it right and it was a perfect match. I let out a big sigh of relief as four months had now passed and another major hurdle had been jumped.

I had taken the console from between the seats, padded parts around the console and the radio tower out of the car so that I could get them recovered with new vinyl. My sister who is a seamstress had helped me get the needed materials together and do the sewing that was needed on the piping on the console. After her handiwork was completed she and I recovered the pieces with the new vinyl by gluing them into place with automotive adhesive. This was a slow, messy, smelly job, but with an extra pair of hands the work went well. We used a lot of clothes pins to hold the vinyl in place until the glue dried and were finally rewarded with perfectly recovered parts at a fraction of the cost to have them sent out to be done.

The wheels that I originally had on the car were a factory bolt-on wire wheel. The Triumph Company made these for the GT6 some time in the early 1970's and was factory originals. I was lucky enough at the time I bought my car that I

had three good rims and had found the missing one through Hemmings Motor News. I had them sand-blasted at that time and repainted them myself. No spokes were missing in any of the rims and I even designed new center caps for the rims as I only had one original one. I redesigned the mechanism to attach the caps so they could not come off the car without first removing the

rims. Over the years the rims started looking their age so rather than redo them again I decided to go with Mini Lite rims. The new rims cost \$500. I decided to clean the old rims the best that I could and sell them on an auction site on the Internet. After a week a guy in New York bought the old rims for \$400! So I lucked out and managed to get brand new rims for the GT6 for only \$100. I've leaned over the years that you have to be resourceful when it comes to restoring cars on a budget.

The interior of the car was shaping up nicely now and all was in place to start putting the original doors back on to the car. After all the painting that had been done on the doors they matched perfectly with the newly painted body. Once again fate stepped in and threw the project another curve. The previous owners who put the wrong doors on the car had to change the striker plates that matched up to these door to make them work. Now these striker plates would not work with the original doors. Once again I went to searching the Internet for a source of striker plates to match the original doors. My source in Green Bay came through with them once again after loosing the first set in the mail and sending a second pair six or seven weeks later. Another hurdle had been crossed. After the doors were installed the GT6 could finally be washed and buffed out after over two years of work had taken place. At this point it looked like the car was finally going to be done and back on the road very soon.

Dan had called me a few days after the car had it's wash and buffing done to say that I should come to his shop as he had gotten the car running once again and that I should check it all out. I arrived with much anticipation and was not disappointed. It looked fantastic. Minor things seemed to be all that needed to be done yet to finish the car and get it back on the road. Install the radio, minor trim, the car seats etc. Dan said that he'd start it up and let me hear it run. It cranked and cranked and finally coughed and died. It would not be running today. Gas was leaking out of one of the carburetors. Not an encouraging thing to see on a newly restored car. The next day Dan called and said that one of the floats in the offending carburetor had stuck in the open position

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flooding it. He replaced the floats in both carburetors and installed new seals, jets, etc to rebuild them to factory specs. After adjusting both carburetors and leaning them out greatly the engine fired to live once again with little more effort.

About a week later Dan called to say that the car had been completed and was ready for a shake down cruise to get the bugs out of it. I picked up the car and drove it back to my home twenty miles away on a warm sunny spring day. All seemed in order except the fact that the temperature gauge was running hotter than normal. After a few days I returned the car back to Dan to give him a list of things that I wanted corrected on the car that needed adjusting or tightening. I nearly didn't make the twenty miles back to the shop. The temperature gauge was into the red when I coasted it back into his shop with the radiator gurgling. Something was definitely wrong with the cooling system. Dan said that he would look into all the problems that I had listed especially the cooling problem. The next day he once again tore down the engine. All looked in order as he thought possibly the company he ordered the head gasket from had accidentally sent a TR6 gasket instead of one for a GT6. More investigating was needed. He checked all the ports in the engine and found that he needed to look deeper into the engine to clear the build up of 33 years of sludge in the cooling system. Two days later the engine was put back together again after removing at least a good-sized coffee can of gunk from it. Dan took it out and drove it a good length of time after I insisted that a seven-mile drive be too short to get a sizeable rise in temperature. Again the temperature in the engine seemed to be running hotter than normal but at least not redline. The engine thermostat was changed along with the temperature sensor and the gauge was found to be reading correctly after changing it with another gauge. With all the changes the result was still the same. The engine was still running too hot. I in the mean time was back on my computer searching for an answer to our problem. One thing that I did find on the Internet that I had suspected years earlier was that the radiator on the GT6 came with a shroud that was fitted to the front of it. This scooped in more air as it was cruising. I



had always thought that I should put one back on the car as it had never been there when I bought it. Two days later I received the new shroud in the mail and was off to Dan's shop once again. Dan had come across the most likely cause to our cooling problem. The manifold for the heating system in the car was completely plugged shut with rust and sludge. It was impossible to clean out and was declared "Junk". Dan installed a new manifold and with the new radiator shroud back in place the engine cooling was tested found to be a stunning success! The temperature gauge never went beyond 50% from then on. The final hurdle had been cleared and the car was officially declared done.

As you can tell from this article I am not a car mechanic nor do I claim to be. I leave the major repair work up to the guys like Dan that know what they're doing. I consider myself to be the gopher, moneyman, and part time tinker when it comes to working on my car. The real credit for the car restoration must go to my friend and mechanic Dan Buxner who runs a British restoration and repair shop in LaMotte Iowa. Without his patients, guidance, and expertise at repairing my car and his knowledge of British cars in general my GT6 would not be in the excellent condition it is today. Many thanks go to Dan for all his efforts. ■

Turnabout is Fair (if not painful) Play

BY SUSAN HENSLEY



Back in the mid-1980's, when I had my first Spitfire, the original Elliott (Domino's Pizza delivery vehicle Supreme!), a friend invited me over for daquiris and cards. He and his roommate lived in Westlake,

a small town across the river from Lake Charles, Louisiana, where I lived at the time. I was to drive over after work Friday afternoon and meet them at their apartment.

Elliott had been having a little trouble with his exhaust pipe — the hanger had broken and the exhaust dragged on the ground. In my busy life, I hadn't made the time to properly fix it and had just wired it up with a hook made out of a coat hanger, from which it would occasionally slip and drag under the car. As I came off the bridge into Westlake and rounded a curve on the river road, the exhaust slipped out of the hanger and started dragging. By now I was adept at handling this problem and had my exhaust re-hanging towel all ready in the front seat. I popped out of the car with the towel, grabbed the hot tailpipes with it to protect my hand, and maneuvered the muffler up into place. Just as it went into place, the tip of my index finger went around the towel and contacted the hot pipe.

Yeow! Sucking my burned fingertip, I threw the towel into the front seat and grumbled my way to my friend's apartment. As he met me at the front door, I playfully moaned about my poor, burned finger and could I please get some ice? At first he was concerned and made me a little ice pack, but as I told him how it happened, he and his roommate fell apart with laughter and teased me unmercifully about how I did it. I didn't hear the end of it all during the daquiri-making process and the first few rounds of Bourre, then the drinks ran out and it was time to make more.

My friend poured the rest of the rum into the blender and told me he had a neat trick he wanted me to see. He asked if I had ever lit a liquor bottle and I said no. He grabbed his lighter and held it to the freshly-emptied bottle. The result was spectacular — the alcohol fumes ignited with a whoosh and a beautiful blue flame that raced around the inside of the bottle and erupted from the mouth in less than a heartbeat, burning the tip of HIS right index finger in the process!

O-h-h-h-h boy. He didn't hear the end of it from us all night long! I a-o-o-o-ogahed Elliott's horn as I left afterwards, and held up my bandaged finger, and my friend's roommate whacked him in the shoulder and fell down laughing. And the very next morning I took Elliott to the muffler shop to have the exhaust hung properly. ■



SIDE BAR:

Those of you who frequent the Spitfire email list know Susan. Ever wonder why she calls her Spitfire Elliott? These photos (taken in the 80's) show her Mk3 sporting its new replacement bonnet. The bonnet came with the word "Elliott" hand painted at the lower front and the name stuck.

Recently the TriumphSpitfire.com website asked readers if they had a special name for their Spitfire. Spitty was the most popular name with 5 respondents. Listed are just some of the names people use:

HardWay, Kermit, Baby Blue, Katie, Nigel, Penny, Tatiana, Big Penis, Midge, Jenny, Shorty, Mello Yellow or Miss Daisy, Putterson, Judas, Stapo 74, Toy, P-51, Rusty, Dog, Sandy, Algy, Skate, Lloyd, Fox, 76, Colours, Ol' Spit, Spit Wad, the Go-Cart, Hoick, Overdrive, One day, Charity (named after one of the Gloucester Gladiator aircraft from Malta, as both are made from parts from all over)

May Your Spitfire Never Spit Fire

BY JEFF CARTER

The fire. Now there's an embarrassing story. First I'll warn you that I've only had my 1978 for less than two years and I am by no means a mechanic, this being my first foray into British roadsters. With a little Spitfire wisdom, I may have been able to prevent this from happening. Ah, but you live and learn.

Well last November, I was taking the last trip in my Spitfire for the season (you Northerners know what I mean) down to my sister's garage in Rhode Island where my Spitfire hibernates for the winter. I was 15 miles from my destination when I suddenly noticed a foul smell coming from somewhere under the dash. At first, I thought nothing much of it as I've counted at least 7 mechanical "odors" coming from my car in the two years that I have owned it, all of which never mounted to much. I was traveling at about 40 mph when I suddenly notice smoke coming from the passenger side foot/dash area. I loosen my seat belt and bend over to look underneath (yes, I'm still driving at this point) and I see the flickering shadows of flames on my black carpets. It was reflecting the actual flames from the engine compartment.

At this point, I immediately pull over and signal to my girlfriend Elizabeth, who is driving her car behind me, that there's something very wrong. So I jump out of the car thinking of those 70's TV shows such as *Emergency* and *CHiPs* where cars explode in huge mushroom-shaped fireballs, and just watch for about 30 seconds, waiting for my Triumph to be engulfed in an inferno. Nothing happens. By this time, Elizabeth has also pulled over and comes running up to ask what's wrong. "There's a fire in the engine! I saw it underneath the dash!" I yelled.

After waiting another 30 seconds and not seeing much, I slowly approached the car and I see dripping molten plastic coming from underneath the passenger side dash. It's dripping onto the floor

and burning the carpet. Then I look closer and see flames and hit the panic button again. My girlfriend runs to the nearest house and calls the fire department (I give her all the credit here, she definitely acted while I just froze). The neighbor

comes out with a fire extinguisher and I gave it a quick blast and it was out. But, I've now coated my ENTIRE interior with fine white fire extinguisher powder, CD player and all.

Within three minutes, no less than three fire trucks show up, lights and horns blaring in a scene right out of *The Towering Inferno*. At this point, I'm just humiliated. The firemen check it over, open the bonnet, and immediately point out the cause. A wire had frayed and was rubbing against one of the battery posts. To this day, I'm not sure what caused the movement for it to wear through to bare wire, but it may have been because the person sold it to me HAD THE WRONG SIZED BATTERY FACING THE

WRONG DIRECTION! Maybe it shifted occasionally and caused the fraying, I don't know. All I know is that my entire harness was fused in one molten lump of plastic and my electronics were dead. I had the car towed the nearest Spitfire garage, a convenient 30 miles away, and they re-did the wiring for me. After my deductible, my insurance company cut me a check for \$73. Thanks, that really helped. They did have the funniest line when I told them it was a Spitfire. The adjuster said "I guess it really did!" I've learned to appreciate this much more as time has gone on.

So, needless to say, the car is running great again and I've put that episode behind, all the while retaining a valuable lesson. First thing I bought this spring when I got her back on the road was an on-board fire extinguisher. Then new floor mats to cover the charred carpets. The white dust vacuumed up rather nicely, thanks.

May all your Spitfires never spit fire. ■

"I SLOWLY APPROACHED THE CAR AND I SEE DRIPPING MOLTEN PLASTIC COMING FROM UNDERNEATH THE PASSENGER SIDE DASH."

Confessions of a Triumphaholic

BY BOB MENZIES

"Hello. My name is Bob, and I'm a Triumphaholic."

"Hello Bob!"

Does this seem like a fitting beginning to the start of a TSMC meeting? Maybe it does, maybe it doesn't. Lets examine this closely, and see what we come up with.

The first step in any 12- step program is to admit that you have a problem. Quite frankly, yes, I do have a problem. It has been almost 8 months since I have had a Triumph to drive on an every day basis, and it is starting to take its toll on me. I can't drive 2 miles without thinking what a delight it would be to be driving one. I keep looking for a TR on the road, but they are few and far between. And when I do see one, it doesn't really make me feel any better, just wishing that I had one on the road too!

I do, however, still have a Triumph. I am reminded every time I walk out to the garage. And for those of you who have seen my garage, you know what I mean. But it is like a bottle of 21 year old Scotch Whisky, You know it is on the shelf, but you can't take a sip every time you see it. My Triumph, you see, is in about as many parts as one can be in and still be called a car, sort of.

Ah, this disease is dangerous! I have recently come up with a plan to sell my recently-purchased Ford truck, and lay claim to a '70 GT6, which has been put up for sale. I know the car well, and the price is very fair. I know the past two owners and know all that has been done to the car over the last several years. Heck, I could even trade some of my spares to lower the buying price!

But to do that, I would have to make room in the garage to put it at night. Can't have the neighborhood cats climbing all over it, ya' know. Last week I started the process of making some room out there. I actually made a trip to a local dumpster to unload some of the parts that I have accumulated. Thankfully, not all of them made it to the scrap heap, only the parts that weren't totally per-

fect. The others wound up in the hands of someone who might have need of them in years to come. Hard to scrap perfect doors and such, but if you don't have the room.

But, on the other hand, I do have 3 kids and the need may arise for me to transport all of them at the same time. Hard to fit 4 in a TR! A point my loving wife has been making for quite some time now. So I bought a truck, extended cab with 2 back seats. Perfect size for the 2 boys, and a bed to haul the TR parts to a place other than here. That way, when the wife is at work and I need to get the kids somewhere, I will be able to do.

Hold the phone! Wait a second! Whoa Nelly!!!! Lets examine this closely, shall we! Just what is the problem ?

Well, first of all, my TR is in pieces! It will be a beautiful little car when done too. Drop-head GT6, overdrive, 3:63 rear, Roto-flex, Valencia Blue, Can't wait to get her going!

Secondly, why am I throwing away or getting rid of these parts that haven't been made for over 30 years? It's not like they can be found on any corner. I mean these are actually little pieces of history floating around out there, an era of automotive mind-set that will never come again! What I need is MORE ROOM!!

And last, but not least, is who am I fooling here? I should know by now that Kim, bless her heart, will most likely never be able to get a job. She has way too many things that have to be done with the kids and such, so she can ferry the kids in the family van, which I am still making payments on. So why shouldn't I get the GT6 as a daily driver?

So after all, we can all be assured that there is no such thing as a Triumphaholic! The problem associated with this is not from all of us who love these little cars, but with all of those who DON'T!

"Hello, my name is Bob, and I love Triumphs!"

"Hi Bob!" ■

Unlucky Spitfire?

BY MITCHELL RHINE

After the demise of my very first sports car, (a beautiful TR250 I totaled on the night before Christmas), the urge to get another sports car was undeniable. One day while passing by a Sunoco gas station near exit 75 off I80 in Pennsylvania, I spotted a green Triumph Spitfire parked in the abandon/wrecked car lot next to the building, I stopped immediately and inquired. The mechanic on duty said the car had broken down on the interstate, (a Triumph broken down?) and was towed in. He said the driver couldn't afford to have the car repaired so he sold it to the owner of the gas station. I asked if it was for sale and the mechanic said that I'd have to ask his boss. He said his boss would be in at 7:00 am tomorrow.

The next day found me standing by the car at 7:00 am waiting for the owner to arrive. The owner was pointing out the pristine condition of the car "she's from North Carolina," he exclaimed, "only 19K miles". I inquired as to the price and got "she's yours for a \$ 1000". The year was 1977, the car was a 1975 and was the most beautifully shaped car I'd ever seen, (save for that of my TR250). I'd asked what's wrong with it? He said "I don't know but it won't turn

over, look under the hood", so I did.

This beautiful car had a connecting rod protruding through the engine block. I bought it on the spot.

For the next several weeks I called salvage yards about a used engine. While waiting for a reply from the salvage yards, I explored the car and dreamed what it would be like to drive it; I read the owners manual over and over, opened and closed the "bonnet", (at least five times a day), played with the map light etc. I removed the engine and cleaned the engine bay preparing it for the new/used engine.

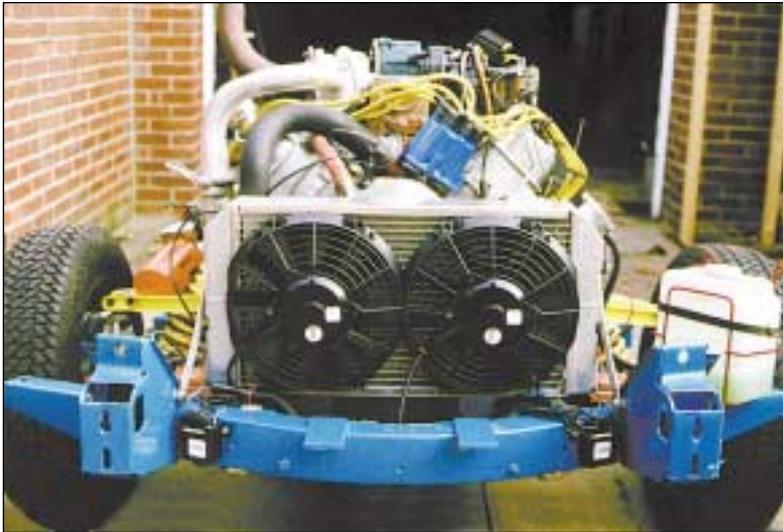
Finally I got the call, but I'd already spent all my money on the car. The salvage yard wanted \$500 for the motor and they only would guarantee that it wouldn't burn oil "excessively". I went to the closest loan office and borrowed \$1000; (you always need a little extra for those odds and ends).

I bought the engine and installed it. Life was good, driving the Spitfire was even better than I

had dreamed. My friends liked it too. I taught my girlfriend how to drive a stick and left her use it from time to time.

Then darkness fell one dreadful evening while visit-





ing some friends at an informal party. As the evening grew late people started to leave. One fellow, driving a jacked up 1969 GTO, (AKA Goat), backed into the Spitfire's left rear fender. It was an accident but I was livid. I insisted that he pay for the damage and there will be no body filler on this car. The rear fender was replaced and repainted.

Soon came the final payment on my thousand dollar loan. What a great feeling it was to drop by the loan office and hand them the last payment. The feeling wasn't to last. As I came out of the loan office, my heart nearly stopped. My beautiful Spit had been pushed backward about two feet, coolant was pouring out of the radiator and there

was a huge gash in the front of the bonnet. There had been a red Ford F 350 4x4 parked in front of my car when I went into the loan office, it wasn't there when I returned but its bumper hitch left its mark. Back into the loan office I went to borrow some needed cash so I could repair my Spit. In an attempt to find the owner of the Ford, I posed myself as a tele-marketer and made about a thousand calls, no luck.

Months later after my Spit was back in its shiny BRG condition, and the recently acquired \$500 loan was paid off disaster struck again, this time from above. On a cold sunny winter day, I was dropping by a friend's apartment. She resided in a building that was accessed from the main street via an alleyway between two five-story buildings. Immediately after making the turn into the alley, a teenage boy standing in the middle of the alley and waving his arms yelled for me to stop so I did. Seconds later the trunk of a well-seasoned six foot blue spruce, (formerly a Christmas tree) fell from the sky and planted itself on the top of the Spit's bonnet. The plastic fan blade went thuda, thuda, thuda in response. The boy took off!

I got out of the car and looked up. A woman was looking down and screaming at the boy, "I told you to stop the traffic you dumb shit." I don't think he was listening since he was by now on the other side of town. The woman had six kids, her husband was in jail and she was on public assistance, she gave me \$75.00. I headed back to the loan office for more money.

LATER

I landed a new job in Gettysburg PA and the Spitfire came with me. I lived close to my job and found it refreshing to walk to work. I found a small garage to rent to house the Spitfire. By this time the engine was getting short on breath, so I decided to overhaul the engine, fix the bonnet and repaint the whole car. It all started out simply enough but one thing led to another and before I knew it I had completely stripped the Spit to the frame. I rented a BIG sand blaster, (this thing was on a trailer and had an engine bigger than the Spit's) blasted almost everything, undercoated, rebuilt and repainted the Spitfire until it was better



than new. But, as you could guess, it was not to last.

Remember the movie starring Clint Eastwood, *Play Misty for Me*. Well instead of trying to kill me, she did something far worse. She went to my rented garage, broke the windows and threw a pile of bricks onto my freshly painted Spitfire. Instead of throwing her over a cliff, I reported her to the police. She admitted liability but I never saw her again or any money.

I drove the poor cosmetically challenged Spitfire for several years until one day the thrust washers spun out of the crankshaft center flange. I managed to get the limping Spitfire home and was considering another engine re-build when I got word of another job opportunity in New York. So me and my other means of transportation, (a pink MG Midget) went to the "Big Apple". Having no garage in NY, the poor Spitfire was forced into hibernation in central Pennsylvania in my mother's back yard. One day, I vowed, the Spitfire will return. The "one day" was to be 12 years long.

TODAY

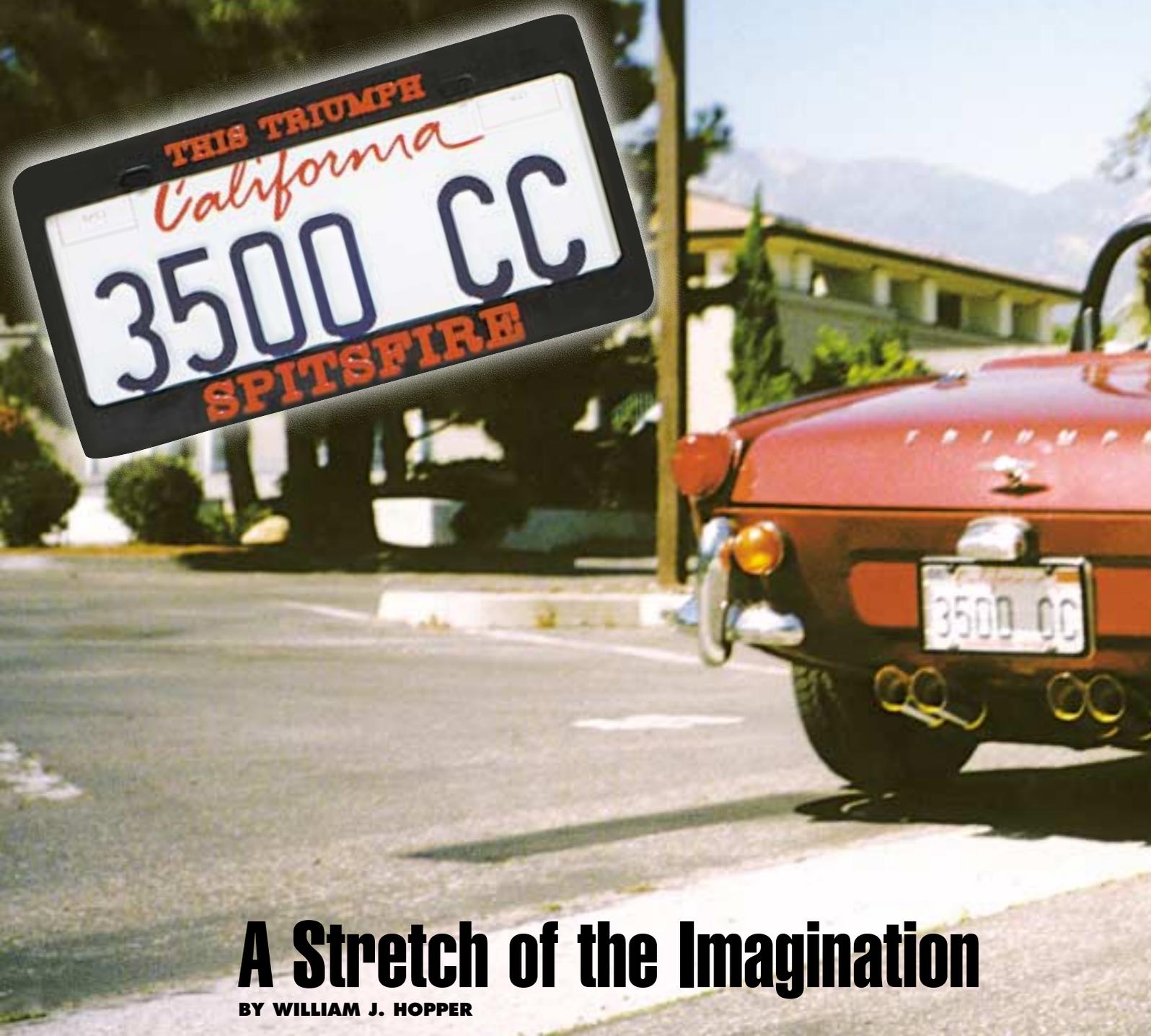
After establishing a foothold, (house, family and garage) in the "Big Apple" it was finally time

to bring the Spit back to life. It had been parked outdoors on blocks for over 12 years and on the worst possible winter night, through salt, snow and icy conditions, I towed it 240 miles to it's new home.

Never being quite satisfied with the engine's performance, I decided when I rebuilt the Spitfire this time, it was going to have some real fire,

The Spitfire has come full circle and gone through a complete transformation. Again the body was removed, sand blasting, epoxy coatings, new springs, rubbers and things etc, etc. But the fire under the bonnet now comes from a GM source, a 1963 Olds 215 CID aluminum V8 with, (believe it or not), a factory turbo charger and "Turbo Rocket fluid injection". The transmission is a Borg Warner T5, the wheels are American racing and the paint is DuPont's Chrome Illusion, (Jade Perfection).

The Spitfire is once again finished, but dare I drive it? Although I'm happily married and don't think I'll ever see Misty again, many people here drive monster SUV's, celebrate Christmas, (with live trees), and the buildings; they're much much taller. ■



A Stretch of the Imagination

BY WILLIAM J. HOPPER

I have been a Triumph Sports car enthusiast since 1972 with the purchase of a GT6. In the following years that followed I have owned 9 GT6's, 7 Spitfires, 3 TR7's and 1 TR8.

This Spitfire was preceded by two 6-cylinder Spitfire project cars. My first attempt at a Spit-V6 was the transplant of a GT6 2.0 litre engine resulting in a Spitfire 2000. This was a straightforward swap and very rewarding as it combined the best properties of both the GT6 and Spitfire. The sound of that GT6 engine at highway speeds with the top down is exhilarating.

With success I became more ambitious and

constructed a Spitfire 2500. The slight performance increase of this 2.5 liter TR6 engine (105 hp) over the 2.0 liter GT6 engine (95 hp) did not justify the added effort in shoehorning this taller engine into a Spitfire. In retrospect, I feel that the GT6 engine is without a doubt the better choice for a Spit-6 project.

Our Spitfire 3500 project comes as close to owning a 427 Cobra as we are likely to ever see. The aluminum 3.5 liter engine has been upgraded with a performance camshaft, higher compression pistons, a 390 cfm Holley carburetor, and custom-made headers. This brings the engine's output to





an estimated 200 horsepower. The front suspension and brakes have been borrowed from a GT6 and Quaife limited slip differential have been added for good measure.

The car weighs in at 1780 pounds making a impressive power-to-weight ratio. Under hard acceleration, this car grabs your attention like no other car I have ever driven. The handling is surprisingly neutral with the aluminum V8 engine weighing less than the 6-cylinder cast

iron blocks. All considered I would have to say that I am very pleased with this most recent engine swap.

Only when parked along side another Spitfire does it become evident that this Spitfire 3500 is actually 8 inches longer than stock. The bonnet and frame have been extended to accommodate the new engine along with its 5-speed transmission.

This is a Triumph



TR8 in Spitfire's clothing.

My wife Christie stepped into the garage as I was working on this car one evening and made the following profound statement: "Why don't you just bolt in a jet engine? You are going to do it eventually anyway!" I can see why she would consider that to be the next logical step in my series of engine swaps.

One of the more memorable events with this car occurred during the Moss Motors British Car Festival held in Solvang, California in 1998. I was preparing to race my Spitfire for the first time in the Autocross slalom competition when I was made aware of a "Women's All British" class. I had a difficult time persuading Christie to enter this competition and when she finally agreed to race, she pointed out that she had never actually driven this car before. She only had a few minutes to acquaint herself with the car before taking her first of 3 timed runs. Her lap times improved by several seconds on the second and again on the third and final run. Following this display of driving prowess, she received the award as "The Fastest Female British Car Driver" of the 2-day event. I could not have been more proud! ■



	<u>1964 SPITFIRE MK1</u>	<u>1964 SPITFIRE 3500</u>
ENGINE CONFIGATIONS		
Engine	in line 4	V-8
Construction	Iron block & head	Aluminum block & head
Capacity	1147 cc	3528 cc
Power	63 bhp	200 hp
Transmission	4-speed	5-speed
Length	12ft. 1in.	12ft. 9in.
Weight	1568 lbs.	1780 lbs.
Top speed	96 mph	140 mph
0-60 (kph)	13.7 seconds	5.5 seconds



Electrifying!

BY RALPH GOODWIN



What do you get when you take a smog choked British sports car, put it on a diet and quadruple the horsepower! You get the “Fastest Gun In The East!” A electric car that is fun to drive, has unbelievable performance, and is cheap to operate and maintain! A car that can autocross with the best, and serve as a poster car for cleaner air!

Built by North Johnston High School students in Kenly, NC this car was designed for participation in the Carolina Electric Vehicle Challenge. This car proves that electric cars don't have to be slow, difficult to drive or ugly! Competing against high schools from across the southeast US, the Spitfire was recognized at the competition as being the best designed and constructed vehicle there, and on the autocross track clearly dominated the competition!

The car is owned by Pat and Ralph Goodwin. Their antique car insurance agency, Classic Car Services Inc. sponsored the car in the competition so afterwards they would have a unique car that they could use to promote their business at shows

and autocross events across North Carolina.

This story documents the work that the students did on the car. You can also find technical design information about the car and the components that went into the conversion.

WHERE EVERY PROJECT STARTS... THINKING ABOUT IT!

One might say this was the view that got me in trouble! I work for a electric utility and manage our electric vehicle program. As part of my responsibility I work with high school students who learn about electric vehicles, even building their own conversion. Many times as I lifted the



hood on this Spitfire, I thought about how easy it would be to convert to electric power. Lots of places to place batteries. Particularly the smaller high performance absorbed glass mat batteries, such as Genesis Hawkers. The fact that someone had long ago removed much of the required smog equipment made this car a interesting candidate for conversion!

Removal of the radiator clearly showed room for batteries. Common sense cautioned about placing too much lead ahead of the front axle, but that's something the students will have to figure out!

Other places to put batteries include the previous gas tank location. This view is looking from the trunk forward. The gas tank location is on the shelf visible between the two wheel wells. Batteries can go in front of, on and behind this shelf. Again, one of the tasks the students will have is to optimize battery location to achieve the best weight distribution.

TAKING IT APART!

To start we weighed the car. Then we pulled the engine, and body tub. All this was to enable us to get to the frame. All the suspension components are removed, examined and replacements ordered as needed.

The front cross member (figure 1) is being modified to allow room for the ADC electric motor. This modification will allow the motor to be mounted low in the frame, thus helping to keep a low center of gravity. A little more sanding and the students will have the frame ready. The modifications (figure 2) to move the cross member forward to allow proper mounting of the motor is complete. This modification will make sure that the proper driveline alignment is maintained. Front suspension components have been cleaned, repaired and primed, ready for painting, new bushings, etc and reassembly.

Here it is! The motor (figure 3) attached to the overdrive transmission. As you can see we have used a special adapter plate. What you can't see is that this adapter lets us use the original type clutch!

No, we aren't going to use ordinary batteries! Here is one of the Hawkers that will provide the energy to propel our project!

How can you not get excited at this point (figure 4)! Kevin Boykin, lead instructor on the project checks everything out. Mr. Boykin is recognized as being one of the best in the southeast US at converting a gas car to electric power!

GETTING CLOSE!

Here you can see the motor mounted in the frame and the front battery box in front of it (figure 5). The front battery box has four of the Genesis batteries in it. The four batteries weigh about 135 lbs. The students were able to put the battery box between the frame rails without interfering with the front sway bar mounts or the steering rack. Figure 6 shows the bottom of the front battery box.

Check out the Carrera shocks (figure 7) supplied by TSI Automotive! These shocks, the Yokohama autocross tires, and the camber compensator on the rear should help to keep all 4 tires firmly planted on the autocross course!





The four batteries up front aren't nearly enough, so here are 9 more that will sit behind the seat! This battery box will power vented outside of the car. 165 pounds over the axle and about 135 in front of it! The students wanted to keep weight distribution as close to stock as possible, so no batteries in the trunk! The thirteen total are fine for autocrossing but would not last for extended driving. More batteries were needed. We decided to add DEKA 8G22NF batteries (figure 8) and mount them in a small trailer. The trailer is designed to be pulled behind a motorcycle. A nice light-weight, removable solution.

MAIN ELECTRICAL COMPONENTS

Motor: Advanced DC 203-06-4001A

The brushed series DC motor is the best overall motor for affordable road-going conversions available today. AC motors operate at high rpm that have to be stepped down, and have expensive and complex speed control systems. Brushless DC motors also require expensive controllers. Permanent magnet motors are very efficient, but only in a very narrow rpm band, and quickly lose their efficiency in the varying speeds of normal driving. Shunt and compound motors are more expensive to build and have poorer acceleration than series motors. For these reasons, the brushed series DC motor is the motor of choice.



Motor Ratings

It is not accurate to refer to a "10 hp motor" or a "15 hp motor", because horsepower will vary with volts and amps, and peak horsepower will be much higher than the continuous rating. It is also confusing to compare electric motors to gas engines, since electric motors are given a continuous rating under load, and gas engines are rated at their peak horsepower unloaded.

The motor weighs 107 lbs. and was mounted to the Spitfire Overdrive Transmission. The students originally tried to use the original type clutch but found that it couldn't begin to handle the increased torque and horsepower. After locking the clutch plate to the pressure plate assembly, the students found the car had ample power to pull from a standing start in any gear, reducing the need to change gears! When autocrossing the car it is usually run in second or third gear.

Controller: DCP Raptor 1200

The motor controller used employs a microprocessor based control system (blue box in figure 5). It provides high average currents at low throttle positions, delivering exceptional acceleration! Input from the battery pack is 156 VDC, with peak output at 1200 amps.

Batteries: Hawker Genesis 42Ah

There are 13 of the Genesis 42Ah batteries for a total of 152 volts. These batteries are distributed through the car to maintain proper weight distribution.

Model	G42	Length	7.775"
Width	6.525"	Height	6.715"
Weight	32.9 lbs	Total Weight	427.7 lbs

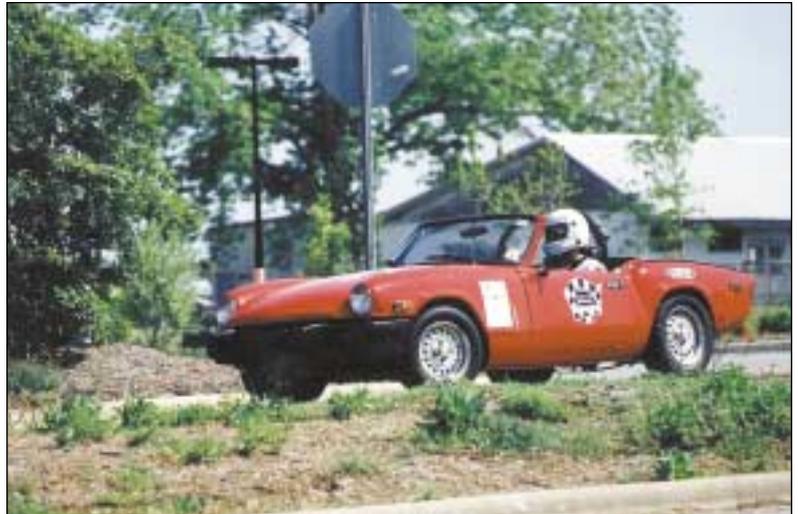
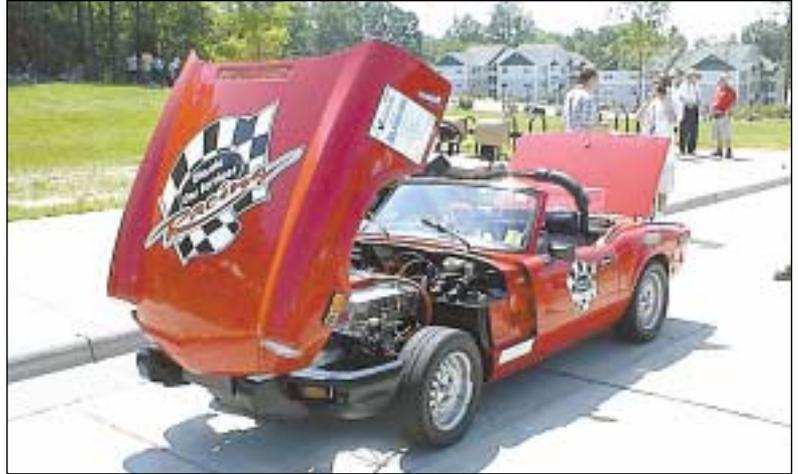
PREPARING THE CAR FOR AUTOCROSS COMPETITION

Part of the Carolina EV Challenge includes a autocross competition. Needless to say, significant bragging rights go to the quickest car between the cones!

The Triumph Spitfire has a past that was hard to beat! In SCCA competition is finished top in its classes for many of the years the car was in production. But how would it do configured as a electric vehicle? How well would it compete with newer conversions?

Of course key to success was rebuilding everything with modern day components. This included poly bushings all around and a complete rebuild of the braking system. Carrera competition shocks were added all around and Carrera springs were added up front. To help control the rear end a Curry Camber Compensator was installed. Finally a set of Yokohama autocross tires were added!

Handling is unbelievable! The car runs like its on a wire! ■



FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT THE WEBSITES:

The Electric Spitfire

www.RTPnet.org/~ev/spit

North Johnston High School, Kenly N.C.

www.njhs.com

Carolina EV Challenge

www.RTPnet.org/~ev

Electric Vehicles of America

www.inc.com/users/evainc.html

TSI Automotive

www.tsimportedautomotive.com

SWISS TRIUMPH RACING TEAM

A group of about 10 members founded the Swiss Triumph Racing Team back in 1997. Because existing regulations in the licensed racing sport in Switzerland it was not possible that everyone interested could start together in the same race, a few Triumph and MG drivers (including the former chairman of the Swiss Spitfire Club, Dieter Messmer) decided to set up their own series. After a lot of bureaucracy they finally agreed and the British Race Challenge was born in 1999. The Swiss championship consists of 11 races - 4 on speedways (one of them in Dijon, France), 6 hill climbs and 1 slalom on a course of a military base.



DETAILS ABOUT DIETER MESSMER'S

SPITFIRE:

Max. speed about 250 km/h (4.11:1 transmission), from 0 - 100 km/h in about 6 seconds, weight is about 730 kg, 138 horsepower, RPM 5500 - 7800, maximum RPM 8500, requires about 25 liters on 100 km/h of petrol, Cambridge Racing Pistons (from the TR6), Carillo Connecting Rods made in the US (made of the same material as used in the Formula 1) at a price of about \$400 each, Tilton Racing Clutch, hardened valves, DCOE40 Weber carburetor, aluminum alternator.



Rolf Messmer trying hard to make up time at Biere

1999 BRITISH RACE CHALLENGE RESULTS

1.	Rolf Messmer	Triumph Spitfire	154
2.	Herbert Senn	Triumph Spitfire	138
3.	Christian Aeschbach	MG GTS	138
4.	Thomas Lerch	MGB GT	110
5.	Dieter Messmer	Triumph Spitfire	101
6.	Philipp Stettler	Triumph Spitfire	80
7.	Ernst Sutter	MGC GT V8	79
8.	Bruno Amstutz	Jaguar XJS V12	76
9.	René Maurer	Triumph Dolomite	60
10.	Heinz Scholl	Triumph Spitfire	32



The way it was meant to be: Triumph in front of MG



Christian Aeschbach burns up La Roche Racetrack

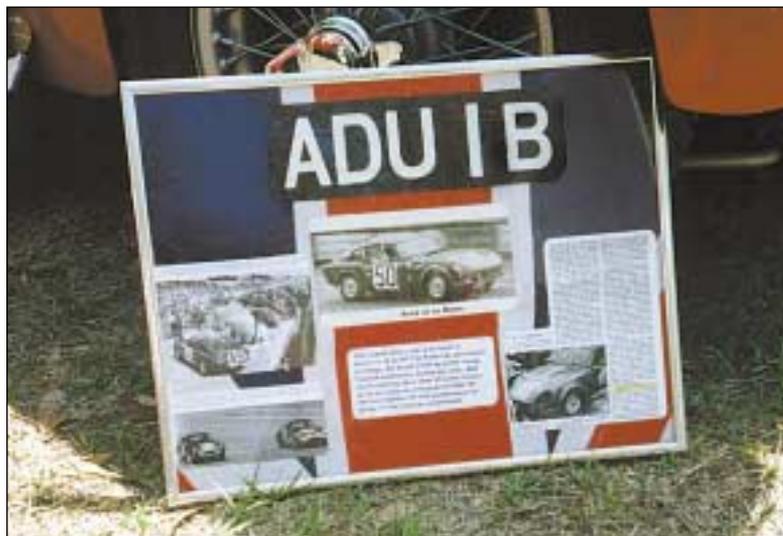
The only remaining piece of ADU-1B

BY BOB MENZIES

TAMPA, FL.— Strange place to find a bit of British car history. Even stranger is that this piece of history is of major significance to Spitfire and GT6 enthusiasts. Stranger still is how this little piece of history turned up in Tampa, and how lucky it was that it was found by someone who knew what it was and how much it meant. What it is, is the only remaining piece of ADU-1B, the original Works Spitfire that was raced at LeMans, and the first of what would later become the GT6.

After the 1963 racing season, Triumph decided to build a racing program around the recently developed Spitfire. At the time, much emphasis was put on competition achievements regarding the sales of automobiles in England. If you raced and won, your cars sold well. And Triumph desperately needed its cars to sell well. The Spitfire was going against the Sprite and Midget, and Standard-Triumph had been out of Works racing for 2 years. Leyland had taken over and finances were tight. Harry Webster had persuaded the company to pursue its racing program, and the 70X engine was developed to increase the power for a prototype Spitfire. Then the program was turned over to John Loyd, who led the LeMans program. With its new fastback, engine, and special bonnet and alloy body panels, 3 factory Spits were entered in the 1964 LeMans. ADUs-1B, 2B, and 3B. Two of the cars, 1B and 3B, retired after slight crashes, and 2B finished the race, with the driver being almost asphyxiated from exhaust fumes. The next year, ADU-4B was entered in LeMans, and took first in class.

But what became of the original 3 cars? ADU-3B was used as a practice car for the 1965 Sebring race, with ADU-4B and 5B as the actual entered cars. 1B was at Sebring, being now



privately owned, and 2B was also sold, but was still in France. Sadly, ADU-1B was back in France under private ownership, when it was seriously wrecked during a race in 1967, and was sold for scrap and crushed in 1968.

So where does Tampa fit into this scenario? In steps, one John Lucas (no relation, but we get great pleasure from kidding him about it!). John has been a Triumph enthusiast for many a years and has also done his share of racing, starting with a Spitfire, and later several TR3's and TR4's. In 1990, John had purchased a previously raced TR4, and it sat in his garage to await use. When he actually began going through the car, the front ID sticker, ADU-1B, was wadded up in the trunk! Somehow the sticker got there from the Sebring race of 1965, but we can only speculate how. Was the TR4's owner there and removed the sticker as a souvenir? Or was it a gift of great significance for some deed of unending magnitude?

Thankfully, John had the knowledge to realize what this sticker was, and what it meant. And the sticker itself? It now is proudly framed, along with several pictures of the car, and is hanging in John's garage. But it seems very happy with its new home. It is among Triumphs. Racing TR's and driving TR's. And every day at noon I turn to the direction of John Lucas's garage, bow my head, and give a silent thanks to John for saving this little piece of a forgotten car. ■



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MG

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MGA (3 window)	199.00
MGC	189.00
Midget	189.00
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MGB '71-on (zipper window)	209.00
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XK-1 50 Convertible	219.00
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SCCA SOLO II NATIONAL TOUR 2000

The SCCA Solo II National Tour autocross hit the Texas Motor Speedway April 14-16, 2000. Among the entrants were several Spitfires, including Susan Hensley's recently-completed "Tristan", a 1967 race Spitfire. Built as a road racer in about 1980, Tris has a logbook full of past competition and past owners, and Susan wanted to continue the tradition.

"This was his first competitive outing since I replaced the engine and fixed several other things and it went very well, all things considering. The only thing I had forgotten was to swap the road race rear end for the autocross one! So while Tristan started and ran very well, we were several seconds behind the other two entrants due to having the wrong gears. I had a lot of fun anyway — Tris handles very nicely and proved to be a peppy little car, if a bit loud (time for the Supertrapp!)."

Two other Spitfires attended the event; one the brown DSP 1500 Spit of Steve Snyder and the other a black DM 1500 run by Jim Gambony. The event total was about 300 cars, and the event ran



smoothly. Autocrossing is a sport in which the Spitfire can shine. Since it doesn't require brute power, the Spitfire has the agility (once the rear end is compensated) to be competitive on just about any course. Miatas will often beat Corvettes on a very tight courses. And the budget is what you make it since there are classes from bone stock to extremely modified. If you are interested in finding out more about autocrossing, look up www.scca.org and go to the Solo 2 section. ■

“YOU KNOW, YOU MAGAZINE GUYS HAVE YET TO TEST A REALLY WELL-PREPARED TRIUMPH! There was one on a tired Sebring car and a couple about warmed-up street equipment. But I’d like to see you have a crack at Gates’ TR4 or Barker’s Spitfire.” The talker was “Kas” Kastner, former terror in a TR3 and now Competition Director for Standard-Triumph in the U.S. The idea was fine by us, as Charlie Gates’ TR4 is the hottest we’ve seen and Ed Barker’s

rapid entries was mechanical; you have to look hard to find a tougher pair of Production car competitors. They’re both chargers and both very experienced.

Aside from our track-testing, Kastner gave us pretty much the full scoop on how both cars were set up. He personally prepares the TR4 and had directed Ed’s preparation of the Spitfire. We consider the information so valuable that the driving analysis will be held to a minimum and these facts detailed for you. All we could hope to confirm, anyhow, was that they really flew.

TRIUMPH SPITFIRE

The little Spitfire has only a brief season in competition, but it’s already obvious that it will make its mark this year. Ed’s car has been mildly stripped to weigh 1420 pounds on the grid; 14 pounds over the minimum allowed. It develops between 58 and 60 horsepower at the rear wheels. Both chassis and engine are fully “prodified”. Ed gets around the Willow Springs course in the 1.51-minute range.

The Spitfire — at least this one — is both easy and extremely comfortable to drive in competition form. The seat and controls fit nicely and immediately made us feel ready to go fast. The first impression is the relatively soft ride combined with good stability and balance. It understeers slightly, stops extremely well,

TRIUMPHS THAT GO!

Spitfire had been literally unbelievable during a recent meet at Willow Springs. Arrangements were made to take both these cars to the same track for evaluation. Willow, while relatively short, is extremely tricky and demands the best in both chassis and engine performance. It takes roughly four laps to learn just about everything there is about the potential and traits of a particular machine. Following Gates and Barker as they towed their Triumphs out to the circuit, we were anxious to find out how much of the success of these

COMPETITION TUNED SPITFIRE AND TR-4



SCG had rare opportunity to test two of the hottest Triumphs on the West Coast in single trip to challenging Willow Springs.

and has impressive acceleration. The engine, redlined at 7000 rpm, feels strong and as though it would *stay* strong all day. Shifting is firm and the ratios fine. The single carp we had was a slightly slow response in steering. Ed said he didn't have this until he cranked in perhaps just a bit too much negative camber in the front end, but the car seems to use very little road in any kind of corner and stays very flat under side-load, so he's certainly close to the ideal setting. We cut four hot ones and got within three seconds of Ed's time; a very enjoyable, healthy car to race, with the amazing performance we expected after watching it. It did the standing-quarter in 17.3 seconds! On a complicated rating basis that it would take too long to explain here, we'd place it in the top six of *any* prepared production car we've driven; first-class.

For the run-down on preparation of the car, let's start with the engine. The first move was the installation of 0.040-inch oversized pistons of stock configuration, but with shortened skirts. The bottom end was carefully balanced and an extra 0.001-inch journal clearance ground in both mains and rods. Standard inserts are used. The journals were also treated with pressurized graphite; a process similar to Parkerizing. The block was ground off to maintain a 0.005-inch deck height over the pistons. The head was cut 0.080 and a thin copper gasket made up by peeling off the 0.008-inch side of the stock laminated gasket and installing a neoprene ring around the oil gallery bringing lube up to the rockers. The compression ratio is 12.5-to-1. Kastner cautioned against cutting more than this amount from the head due to destruction of the spark plug hole threads in the milling or grinding. Combustion-chamber configuration is left stock, but polished. Valves were both lightened and polished, seats ground to 0.020-inch wide and excess material removed from the inner diameter of the seats. Porting is not too radical; the intakes are enlarged by using the o.d. of the sleeve ring installed between the intake manifold and head as a maximum. The ring, of course, is removed. Exhaust ports are squared-out at this point to 1¼th-inch and held as close as possible to the diameter of the valve seat throughout the port.

Installation of the optional camshaft, with its timing of 30-70-70-30 and a wild lift of 0.409-inch, must also include the optional valve springs. The pushrods and rockers are stock, but the lifters — or cam followers — are bored out 0.050-inch and cut down ¾-inch for lightness.

Four pounds is about the maximum that can be removed from the flywheel with safety; it's thin, but large in diameter. The standard clutch disc is used, but pressure plate springs increased by 305 pounds. Also stock in every respect — including its static timing of 13° BTDC — is the distributor. Spark plugs used are either Lodge 47's or 49's, Autolite AE 403's. The SU carburetors get their share of rework, however; the throttle shafts are thinned, the bores bell-shaped at the outer ends, and CG needles installed. All the oil is removed from the piston dampers for quick response. Kastner cautioned against going too rich with the needle size, said the CG had proven to be the best all-around selection.

There are three optional final-drive ratios: 4.1, 4.55, and 4.87. The 4.55 has proven to be the most useful for the vast majority of tracks. Though there are bigger optional brakes available, the units on Barker's car are stock — except for competition lining — and no change is forthcoming as there's never been a stopping problem. The optional steel wheels, with their 4.5-inch rim width and slightly increased tread, are used. Ed had been using a good recap (Caldwell) that sticks well,

TRIUMPH SPITFIRE

PHOTOS: PAT BROLIER



1

but will be using T7 Goodyears on the basis of the same bite, better wear.

As far as suspension setup is concerned, Barker's an old Porsche expert and very familiar with swing axles. Using the optional camber-compensator in the rear, he also has roughly 4½ degrees of negative camber there. Standard springs are used front and rear, with Koni shocks all-around. The swaybar up front is stock, too, but the negative camber in both front and rear gives the little car somewhat the appearance of having been stepped on by an elephant. Sure works, though. Before we forget, there's an oil cooler up front. Kas says it's a must with a warmed-up engine for extra capacity more than cooling.

The same applies for the TR4 — which we're about to detail — but notice that relatively few special options were necessary to make this car a stormer. The cam and pistons are the only major parts changes in the engine, for example.

TRIUMPH TR4

Gates' TR4 is an old warhorse — this is the third season we've seen it — but each year they manage to trim its previous lap times by some two or three seconds. Kas and Charlie work hard to maintain it in their spare time, but it seldom DNF's and is always among the front-runners no matter how many classes are combined in the race. It weighs in at 1885 pounds right now (SCCA is unrealistically considering increasing the minimum some 100 pounds) with a very little stripping. Removal of windshield, bumpers, spare tire, and overdrive will *alone* bring it below the proposed legal minimum. It develops between 120 and 124 horsepower at the rear wheels with an estimated flywheel output of 155. Charlie turned a number of 1.45-minute laps during our



2



3

1—Barker takes Willow's Turn 3 easily with car displaying neutral character.
 2—First-class detailing makes prepared Spitfire attractive and business-like.
 3—Considerable camber of both front & rear wheels is apparent in this photo.
 4—Bendix electric pump is installed in safe position in trunk below gas tank.
 5—Extra gauges were added to left side of dash, replacing normal idiot lights.
 6—Oil cooler is placed beneath grille, protected from rocks with screening.
 7—Barker to Titus; "Well, what do you think?" Our one-word opinion; "Whee!"
 8—Spitfire front suspension is sturdy.
 9—SU's received Kastner modifying.



4



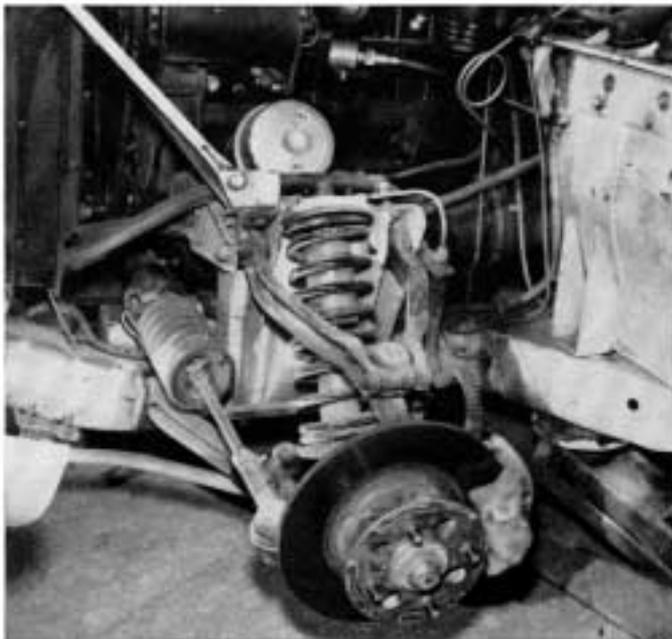
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8



9

outing (the absolute track record is 1.39 at present) without exceeding a conservative redline of 6500 rpm. The car developed a slipping clutch due to an overfull gearbox before we ran the quarter-mile, but we still managed a 16.5-second E.T. by featherfooting.

Charlie's a six-footer, so we were a bit buried in the special seat Kas had fabricated — with siderails to hold the driver in position better — but otherwise comfortable. Off we went, with a satisfying feeling from plenty of torque pressing us in the seat. The shifts were fine, the steering amazingly light and almost overly responsive. We found out what the latter was due to in the first fast corner; as side loads increased the car did what might be described as a flop-over rather than a gradual lean. Until this time, the TR4 felt relatively unstable. Once it flopped, the bite firmed up and it went through fine. All was well and good *providing* you induced the flop before maximum sideload built up. It took us a go-around to figure this out but on our first lap we were thinking, "Gates, you wild old man! You must have some set of nerves to drive this thing fast." Gradually we adapted and were within two seconds of Charlie's time on the fifth lap. When we described the condition later on, Charlie's comment was: "You're the only other person that's ever driven it, but I think you're right. I compensate for it automatically, but I do remember worrying about it the first time we put the car on a track." We hadn't used the overdrive on our outing, but Charlie does, making it a very useful six-speed gearbox as the ratio is close and engagement is fast. Quite a machine as it is and to be even more with a scheduled rework for the '64 season.

The engine has the optional 0.040-inch oversize Hepolite pistons with Grant rings. Watch for variance in compression heights, though, as Kastner has found some needed correction. The present crankshaft has 0.001-inch extra journal clearance and is nitrited, but a new one to be installed will be absolutely stock. Kas has set up other racing TR4's with a stock, even unbalanced crank and found it completely reliable, so figures it unnecessary to spend the extra money. The top of the block is milled to bring deck heights from 0.005 to 0.008-inch. The head is cut 0.110-inch and a steel-shim gasket 0.020-inch thick is used, the latter derived from peeling a standard low-compression head gasket in a manner similar to that used on Barker's Spitfire. The compression ratio is 11.5-to-1 at present. Some five pounds was removed from the optional flywheel and the optional clutch disc and cover are used.

Triumph's optional "D" cam, with 33-71-71-33 timing and 0.393-inch lift was installed along with the tubular pushrods and double valve springs listed. The cam followers were modified like those on the Spitfire. Standard valves are used and stock valve guide shape is retained. Unshrouding the intake valves in the combustion chamber is accomplished to some degree by the milling of the head surface. The sharp edge produced must be radiused, however, and both the thin head gasket and sleeve in the block must be relieved to maintain this unshrouding. The porting job can be described as "normal"; moderate enlargement and elimination of restrictions. The carburetors are belled and the throttle shafts reduced in diameter. RF needles are the most ideal for general racing use. An optional header system improves exhaust flow over the standard unit.

As was the case with the Spitfire, the standard distributor has proven to be the best, with a 10-13° initial advance. Kas uses an EMPI transistor on the TR4 and, while dyno tests have shown no improvement over the stock coil setup, he feels the spark is more consistent in the upper rpm range and has ultimately provided better lap times. Another interesting result of dyno experimentation was that the SU carburetors developed

TRIUMPH TR4



1

more horsepower than the FIA-option Webers! Spark plugs are either Lodge 47's or 49's, Autolite 403 or AE 22. An oil cooler option is installed to keep things cool.

Gates has the chassis set up softer than most of the racing TR4s, using standard springs in back (that have somehow sagged with favorable results), competition springs and the $\frac{3}{16}$ -inch swaybar up front. The torque-arm kit is used in the rear to reduce spring wrap-up and improve stability. Shocks are Koni in front and Armstrong in the rear. The standard brakes are used, even though optional linings up front and bigger rear brakes are available. Stopping is no problem. Charlie uses standard gearbox ratios with the overdrive and a 4.55 final-drive. The O.D., incidentally, is not hopped-up in any way, though Kas recommends disassembly and cleaning about once every three races. One-half a can of STP is added to the lube. The optional limited-slip differential is used.

Other items of importance include the optional magnesium wheels, Bendix electrical fuel pump, and modifying the oil breather to point upwards so that possible dumping of oil in a tight corner is eliminated.

And that about covers two red-hot Triumphs. While we were impressed with both cars, we certainly weren't surprised . . . not after watching them in combat for two seasons. Both models make first-rate and very reliable production race cars, so you Triumph fans can rest assured you drive potential thoroughbreds. We're indebted to Kas for all this good information dumped in our laps, and to Gates and Barker for making their machines available. As we mentioned in last month's Bench Racing column, you may obtain further information on preparing your Triumph — there's not much left — by writing Kastner, c/o Alan Holmes, Competition Coordinator, Leyland-Triumph Co., 575 Madison Ave., New York, N.Y.





2



3



4

1—Barker takes Willow's Turn 3 easily with car displaying neutral character.
 2—First-class detailing makes prepared Spitfire attractive and business-like.
 3—Considerable camber of both front & rear wheels is apparent in this photo.
 4—Bendix electric pump is installed in safe position in trunk below gas tank.
 5—Extra gauges were added to left side of dash, replacing normal idiot lights.
 6—Oil cooler is placed beneath grille, protected from rocks with screening.
 7—Barker to Titus; "Well, what do you think?" Our one-word opinion; "Wheel!"
 8—Spitfire front suspension is sturdy.
 9—SU's received Kastner modifying.



5



6



7

Independence Day Giveaway

BY JOHN GOETHERT

Tom came in one morning exclaiming “have you seen *Spitfire Grill?*” Well, I didn’t have a clue what he was talking about. He went on to explain about a movie that caught his eye in the video store and for the fun of it rented it.

The movie talks about an old lady in rural Vermont that owns a small diner... “the Spitfire Grill.” She is getting very old and needs to retire but being in such a small town she realizes quickly selling is out of the question. The young helper suggests giving the grill way by means of a contest where people would write an essay explaining why they would like to win. The best essay wins.

Of course this story line got our minds racing. Could we possibly give away a car? One of the hardest parts about doing a magazine is finding stories. I have talked to many people that say that they would like to submit something but they don’t feel their input is valuable enough. I explain to them that *any* information they send has value. We Spitfire and GT6 owners have been deprived for so long that we will read anything Spitfire. This contest looks like a great way for people to take a chance and send in something.

We decided that a GT6 was the car for the contest with a little help from an online poll and a little divine intervention. We had searched for

months for the right car; a good solid car, cheap if possible, close to Knoxville if possible. We had little luck. Then a GT6 showed up in the local classifieds. The price was a little more than we wanted to spend but it was solid, not perfect but it had potential.

The car, a 1971 GT6 (commission number KF11265), also serves another purpose other than getting readers to write. It will give *us* inspiration for stories. It has a few minor problems that we will fix and do stories about. The car is, story wise, the opposite of my 76 Spitfire. The GT6 has a 6 cylinder, the Spit a 4. The GT6 has dual carbs, the Spit 1. Rotoflex rear suspension rebuilds vs installing a top. You get the picture.

The car will be given away July 4, 2001 (Independence Day, cute huh?) by random drawing. Unlike the Spitfire Grill, we know we would not be able to pick the best.





HOW DO I WIN?

How can you get a chance at taking this classic home? Entry is easy! There are four different and easy ways to get entered:

1. Send a story in one of the following categories: (minimum length 200 words, please include photos, illustrations, etc. No money required)

- Spitfire or GT6 Tech Tips
- My Classic Triumph Car
- Restoring or Modifying a Spitfire/GT6
- General Interest Spitfire/GT6 story

2. Send \$5 along with a color photo of any Spitfire or GT6. All photos become the property of triumphspitfire.com for reproduction use online and print. Please provide a SASE if you want photos returned.

3. Be an active paid subscriber to Spitfire & GT6 Magazine.
or

4. Order an item from the www.triumphspitfire.com web site. And you can enter as often as you wish!

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For more information visit www.triumphspitfire.com or email us at info@triumphspitfire.com ■

THE FINE PRINT:

Random drawing from all valid entries will be held on July 4, 2001 in Knoxville Tennessee USA. All decisions final. No purchase necessary. Void where prohibited. Odds of winning is based on total number of entries. Triumphspitfire.com makes no representation as to the quality and condition of car upon giveaway. Tax, Title, Insurance and Transportation cost are the responsibility of the winner from destination Knoxville, Tennessee USA. Winner is responsible for emissions controls, import/export regulations or other certifications required by individual states or foreign countries. Winner must be of legal driving age. Automobile given away com. # GT6KF11265L . Winner will be notified via mail as well as posted on the web site triumphspitfire.com. Winner agrees to let auto and personal photo be taken for promotion use. All photos, stories other items submitted for entry become the sole property of triumphspitfire.com for reproduction use. A self addressed stamped envelope is required for items/photos to be returned. If winner selects not to accept or pick-up the GT6 within 90 days of notification the auto will be auctioned on the web site triumphspitfire.com to the highest bidder with 30% of the proceeds going to triumphspitfire.com for handling.



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The Great Sparkplug Controversy

BY ANDY PREVELIG

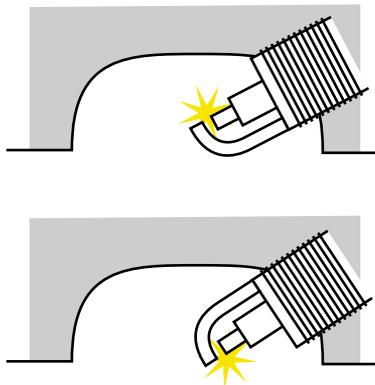
In tuning an engine for maximum performance, even tiny adjustments can make a difference and the search for that slight improvement takes various forms.

For instance there are theories about the advantages of “indexing”: having the sparkplug gap facing different directions, with the idea that one direction may be better than another. The idea has merit since, if it is true, it would be a very cheap way to get that extra edge. Depending on the location of the sparkplug hole and the combustion chamber shape, does the gap orientation really make a difference?

On a standard type sparkplug with a single grounded (negative) electrode attached to the rim and extending over a central positive electrode, one could assume that in one direction the negative electrode might shroud the spark from the fuel mixture... or another direction might impede the flame propagation. As you know, the explosion is just a very rapid burn which starts in a single spot and propagates along a “flame path”, burning the air/fuel mixture within the confines of the combustion chamber. Although rapid, this burn still takes a certain amount of time.

Some people have tried different gap orientations and have noted a difference in engine smoothness... the engine just seemed to run better. Does this prove the theory, or is something else happening in addition, to make the improvement?

Let’s take a closer look at what may be happening. How would you alter the direction of the sparkplug gap? You might simply not torque the sparkplug as tight, or you might use an additional compression ring, or remove one to allow seating the plug with the gap facing a different direction. What all these methods have in common is that the depth or reach of the plug has been changed, either to a shorter reach or an extended reach. A



difference of 180 degree gap orientation (and therefore a 180 degree rotation of the plug) makes an appreciable difference in the depth of the plug’s extension into the combustion chamber— 1/2 the thread distance. However slight, a change in the reach of the plug can actually affect the timing of that particular cylinder.

The depth of the plug determines the length of the flame path, initiated at the spark gap and propagating throughout the chamber. If a plug’s reach is shortened, the burn propagation time is retarded (a longer flame path). In some engines this difference is greater than others, dependent upon combustion chamber shape, volume and plug hole location.

Conversely, if the plug reach is extended, the flame path and burn times are shortened. While this difference is minimal—on the order of microseconds, it can have a noticeable effect on engine performance. (Although your engine’s ignition timing is fixed relative to T.D.C. and altered be either vacuum or mechanical advance, this only affects the initialization of the burn. The plug reach can alter the duration of the burn, in effect giving a fine-tune to the timing, either for the best or the worse.) In fact if there is a difference between either plug length or tightening torque between cylinders, there can be a difference, however slight, in individual power strokes due to the varied length of burns. This can contribute to engine vibration, especially in four-cylinder engines.

So... if a different gap orientation or reach seems to make your engine run smoother, fine. Just don’t mix reaches, and torque all plugs the same. And on compression ring plugs, don’t mix old and new plugs, since the old rings can be compressed more (greater reach) before the indicated torque is reached. ■

Curing Laryngitis

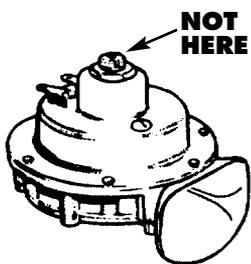
BY JOHN GOETHERT

There has been some discussions lately on the email lists about bringing their horns back to life. Mine recently died and I want to share my research.

First what needs to be determined is where in the electric chain it is broken. The fuse is the first place to look. A blown fuse needs to be replaced and monitored for repeated blowings. Fuses do occasionally blow but more than once in a short time needs further investigation.

If the fuses are ok, go to the horns. It may seem obvious but the wires connected to the horns need to make good connection and a good cleaning will often fix a problem horn. A volt/ohm meter can tell if the horn is getting power. Hook up the leads to the wires coming to the horn and hit the button. If the meter registers, then it is a problem with the horns.

What is not so obvious is a horn may not work because of internal problems. Bugs, rocks other debris will often lodge inside and keep the inner workings from doing their thing. Also, corrosion inside will keep a horn from working. Don't start rewiring a car when both horns don't work. It is not unheard of when both horns stop working due to internal corrosion. First lightly tap the exterior with a screwdriver handle while an assistant is pushing the horn. No luck, use a screw driver to turn the adjusting screw in and out half a turn. This

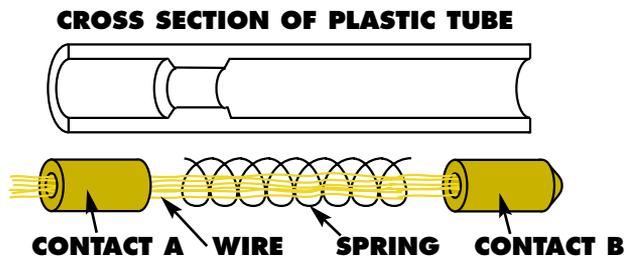


will loosen the internal workings. Do not turn the large center screw. The internal corrosion, if severe enough, can be cleaned by removing the horn, pouring in a small amount of "Liquid

Wrench". Rotate the horn so fluid is guided to the center of the horn. Allow the fluid to break up rust for about an hour then rotate out as much of the fluid as possible. You might want to do it a second time if lots of crud comes out with the fluid. And

of course, let the fluid dry overnight before testing.

If your voltage meter does not register a reading when the horn button is pushed then the fault lies upstream. The two usual places for problems, other than a bad ground, is the horn relay and at the steering wheel. This was the problem in my car. I found that the horn brush had broken. To check, remove the rubber cover around the horn button. Gently pry up the horn button with a flat screwdriver being careful not to crack/break the Bakelite around the button. Look down into the steering column and located at the top in the hole is the horn brush. It is a plastic stick with metal ends about the diameter of a pencil and about 2.5" long. There is an internal wire that can break. To fix the wire drill out the solder in Contact A, then sol-



der the broken wire back together. Put the spring on the wire, push the wire, spring and Contact B into the plastic tube. Slip Contact A into the tube threading the wire out of the other end. I used tape to hold the contacts in place in the tube (the contacts should stick out the ends about 1/8" [5 mm]). Resolder the wire in Contact A. When refitting, Contact B (the contact with the hump) needs to go in first.

From best I can determine, in 1968 a horn relay fitted on Mk3 Spitfires and Mk2 GT6's. It can cause problems usually from corrosion. Cleaning where the wires make connections will often fix the problem. If not, you might find a friend and borrow his relay for testing. If it is the relay, opening it up and cleaning the contacts can often save you from having to buy a new one. ■

Making a Replacement Glovebox for Your Spitfire

BY ANDY PREVELING

The glovebox or "parcel shelf" in many British cars was fabricated from pressboard with a thin covering of vinyl. This means that over the years, and with a little help from moisture, they will need replacement

For about \$15 in materials you can make a replacement glovebox from fiberglass that is waterproof, rot-proof and much stronger than the original. This is simplified if your old glovebox has not deteriorated to the point of missing pieces, since you can use the old one as a pattern. If it has most of the pieces, you can usually extrapolate the missing parts.

Removal of the old glovebox is simple on most LBCs, requiring the removal of only three or

four screws. (I'm speaking of the basic boxes, not ones that have a locking door, although this article applies to the pressboard box section of these as well.) Once the box has been removed, see how the sides were attached together. Most boxes were constructed with flanged areas on each piece which were simply riveted together to form the corners, bottom and top.

Take out the rivets and lay the pieces flat, inside up, on a large piece of corrugated cardboard. Trace the outline of each piece, making up the difference for any missing edges, and eliminating the flange areas. Label each tracing at the edge(s) where the flanges were on the originals so that you can assemble the cardboard pieces correctly. Be sure to mark where the mounting holes are.

Now draw a line 1/8" or 3/16" (depending on the thickness of the corrugated cardboard you are using) inside along your traced edges. What you want is a cardboard copy of the original, but a bit smaller...as if it were to fit inside the original... so that when it's used as a mold, the fiberglass copy will be the same size as the original. Cut out and assemble the cardboard copy with duct tape on the inside and outside of each corner. Now cover the outside of the cardboard completely with the duct tape (this will allow easy removal of the cardboard from the fiberglass later).

I used fiberglass "mat" rather than fiberglass cloth, since the mat conforms better to sharp bends and curves. Cut the mat pieces out, enough for two layers, and trial fit these against the outside of your copy. Next, cut out 2" wide strips of the mat which will reinforce each corner where two sections meet. Once you mix the hardener with the resin, you have a limited time before it cures, and it cures quite fast, so you want to

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rehearse the application of the mat pieces. Use disposable latex gloves and work in a well ventilated area when you use the resin. The proportions of hardener to resin are usually printed on the resin container. You can use a

plastic Coolwhip or whipped margarine tub to mix

the resin in. How much resin to mix up is a matter of guesswork if this is the first time you've used it, so start with about 1/2 of a bowl, or about two cups. Thorough mixing is critical to a good curing.

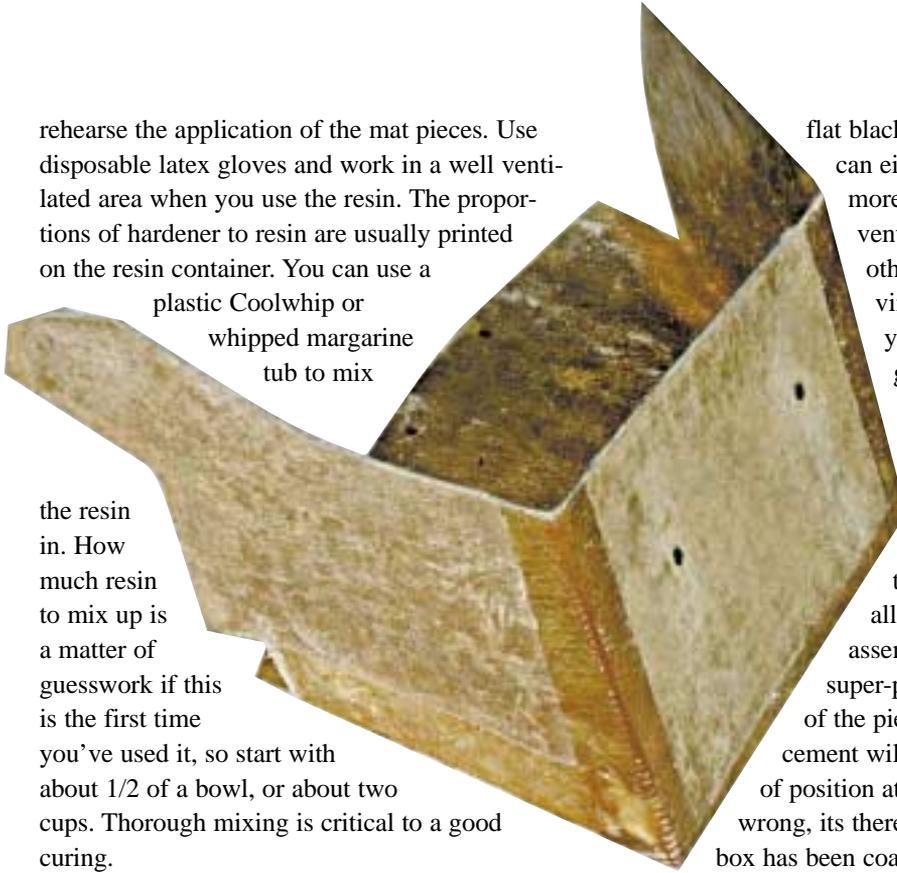
Apply the mat and resin in sections... two or three surfaces only. Once they are cured, you can do the remaining sides. Paint the outside of your cardboard copy sections with some of the resin, then lay the precut mat pieces on. Using an old or disposable paint brush coat each piece with more resin, smoothing the mat out flat and eliminating any air bubbles. As the resin and mat are smoothed out allow the mat to extend just a bit past the edge of the cardboard. Later you trim this extra mat off with a razor, hacksaw blade or sander. When all sections have been laid on, add the 2" strips, centered along each seam.

When cured, drill the mounting holes from the marks inside the cardboard. Now you can peel off the cardboard/duct tape from inside the fiberglass glovebox. Sand the outside of the box smooth. Be sure to use a dust mask. Although this material is wonderful for many kinds of fabrication, it is nasty stuff to work with. Inhaling glass fibers can be extremely harmful. And if you get the sanding dust on your clothes, wash them separately from other cloths, or your entire family will be itching for days.

I sprayed the outside of-my glovebox with

flat black paint. For the inside, you can either paint the box or, for a more elegant look and to prevent scratching sunglasses of other items tossed in, add a vinyl liner the same color as your upholstery. I used the gel type of contact cement spread thin on only the box itself, not on both the box and the vinyl. (The instructions with most contact cements tell you to coat both pieces and allow them to dry before assembly but this requires super-precision in the placement of the pieces of vinyl since the cement will not allow any adjustment of position at all... Once it's located wrong, its there to stay.) After the box has been coated, and before the cement dries, position your vinyl pieces, moving them slightly into the exact position and smoothing out any wrinkles or air bubbles. The cement will dry even without exposure to the air.

Then, as they say in the repair manuals, installation is a reversal of the removal procedure. ■



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Your Engine Sucks!

BY JOHN GOETHERT

A vacuum gauge may be one of the most versatile diagnostic tools you can own. It can be used to find intake manifold gasket leaks, burned valves, weak valve springs, ignition problems, a blocked exhaust system and an out of adjustment carburetor, as well as several other things, provided you know how to interpret what it is telling you.

Because a vacuum gauge measures the difference between atmospheric pressure and the pressure in your intake manifold (as opposed to measuring pressure from some fixed figure), the higher you live above sea level, the lower the outside atmospheric pressure will be, so the lower the manifold pressure reading will be as well. To allow for any differences in altitude, find your locality's elevation on a chart provided with your gauge and interpolate from there. The reason the readings on the gauge are in inches, is because pressure is still measured by how many inches a given pressure would cause mercury to move up a glass tube in an old style barometric gauge. Before attempting a vacuum test, make sure you adjust your engine's idle to the correct

650-850 RPMs. *FYI:* on most old cars, the idle was said to be about right if the car rolls along at 7 to 10 miles an hour on level ground in low gear with your foot off of the gas.

Once again, make sure your engine is properly tuned, its valves correctly adjusted, and that it is thoroughly warmed up before testing. Attach the gauge by installing a tee at the opening on the throttle body of the carburetor where the vacuum advance ties in. *FYI:* Many old cars are equipped with a plug in the intake manifold, but if your car does not, you may want to remove the manifold, drill and tap a hole, then install one for future convenience.

If you attach the gauge to your manifold, you will need to install a nipple, then push a length of rubber tubing onto it and connect your gauge. Make sure all of your connections are air tight before running your tests.

At sea level, a well tuned, healthy engine at idle should show a steady reading of 18-22 inches. Of course, the needle will vibrate slightly even on a sound engine, but it should not show large fluctuations. If an engine reads at an excessively low but steady vacuum, there are several possible reasons for it. A low, but steady vacuum gauge reading means that whatever is wrong is effecting all of your engine's cylinders equally. Here are the things to check:

1. Leaky carburetor or intake gasket.
2. Worn carburetor throttle shaft.
3. Leaking vacuum lines.
4. Improper valve timing.

If your gauge fluctuates, or wonders around through several inches, it indicates a leaking condition affecting one or more, but not all cylinders. Again, keep in mind that a certain amount of needle pulsing is normal especially on 4 and 6 cylinder engines. If you've never used a vacuum gauge before and you feel unsure of your results,



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get an experienced friend to give you a second opinion before tearing your engine apart. Fluctuating can be caused by:

1. A burned or stuck valve
2. Intake manifold leak at one cylinder.
3. Worn intake valve guide.
4. Broken piston or piston rings.

To help further isolate the trouble, run the engine at about 2000 RPM. If the pointer steadies, inspect for:

1. Ignition or timing problems
2. Incorrect carburetor mixture adjustment at idle.

If the pointer's sweeps get larger, check for weak or broken valve springs using, you guessed it, a large screwdriver to tweak the springs. But if the sweeps get shorter and more rapid check for:

1. Carburetor or intake manifold leaks.
2. Sticking valves.

If, when you run the RPMs up to 2000 you see a gradual decrease in vacuum reading, check for exhaust system restrictions such as a kinked tail pipe, or partially blocked muffler.

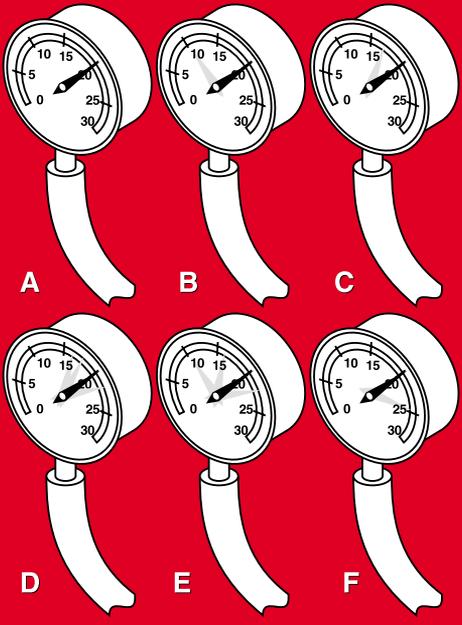
It should be noted that camshaft duration can affect manifold vacuum and idle quality. Many aftermarket cams will bring the compression down to 13-15", depending on how radical it is.

TESTING FUEL PUMPS

Another way most vacuum gauges can be used is to test fuel pump pressure. Of course, because of the volatility of gasoline, you must be very careful when you do it. Work outdoors and have a fire extinguisher handy. Disconnect the fuel line where it goes into the carburetor and attach the vacuum gauge using one of the fittings that comes with the gauge, or one from the auto parts store. Now start your engine. Most likely there will be enough fuel in the float bowl of the carburetor for the engine to run long enough for

the pump to be tested. Compare your gauge's reading to the specification in your shop manual. Or, if you are on the road and do not have that information at hand, you can assume your stock fuel pump is probably good if it tests between 4 and 6 pounds pressure. ■

THE GAUGE



The image shows six vacuum gauges arranged in two rows of three. Each gauge has a scale from 0 to 30 inches of vacuum. The needle positions and fluctuation patterns are as follows:

- A:** Needle steady at approximately 18-22 inches.
- B:** Needle fluctuating between 10 and 15 inches.
- C:** Needle dropping from 18 inches to 10 inches and then returning to 18 inches.
- D:** Needle dropping from 18 inches to 10 inches and then returning to 18 inches, but with a very sharp drop.
- E:** Needle dropping from 18 inches to 10 inches and then returning to 18 inches, with increasing fluctuations as the needle returns.
- F:** Needle dropping from 18 inches to 10 inches and then returning to 18 inches, with very rapid, high-frequency vibrations.

- A. If your engine is healthy, it should read a steady 18" to 22" of vacuum at sea level with engine idling.
- B. If needle fluctuates in below-normal range it could indicate a leak at the intake manifold or at the carburetor gasket.
- C. A regular, intermittent drop below normal indicates valve leakage.
- D. Rapid intermittent dropping below normal indicates sticking valves.
- E. Fluctuations increasing with engine speed indicate weak valve springs.
- F. Fast vibrations, but normal vacuum indicates ignition trouble. Slow movement at normal vacuum indicates incorrect carburetor adjustment.

TR Beater!

BY BILL MCDEVITT



At the time of purchase, I owned a 1970 Spitfire and had run an ad for a parts car. I had a prompt reply to the ad and purchased a 1969 parts car. About three weeks later I received another call wanting to know if I was still interested in purchasing a Spitfire. I couldn't say no without hearing what he had and he explained that it was a 1964, which he had in storage for thirteen years. He went on to tell about the colour scheme. I told him that I would be right over to look at it!! I purchased it on the spot. My wife was not real thrilled about me being the owner of three Spitfires, but I didn't think it was such a big deal. After all, only one was a real running vehicle.

While attending the Roadster Factory Party in 1991, a gentleman and his spouse fell in love with my 1970 and made me a very generous offer for same. They already had a fleet of Triumphs, but did not have an early Spitfire!! After much thought about how far these funds would go toward the restoration of the 1964, Darrel and Bev Floyd became the new owners of the 1970.

This was August of 1991 and upon arriving home, I immediately began the restoration of the 1964. I wanted to do this one to perfection, just as it came off the assembly line. To assure accuracy, I wrote to the The British Motor Heritage Trust and obtained a copy of the Production Record Trace Certificate, which lists all the serial numbers, colours, accessories, etc.

At the same time, I completely disassembled the entire unit right down to the last nut and bolt. Every piece was sand blasted or glass beaded. Each piece was painted individually, contrary to my painters wishes. He wanted to paint it after assembly, but I didn't want any over spray or any hard to get to places missed.

Then came my quest to find any NOS parts available anywhere in the US. A few were not available anywhere, so I refurbished the old to new specifications.

I attached the tub to the frame and then the suspension. Later, I stood back and said to my self, it's starting to look like a car again. That was a thrilling moment and I started to work on it every night and every weekend, to the point Linda that was telling everyone that she was a Spitfire widow!!

The memory fades after over one year of tearing it down and making a few mistakes, like the distributor was 180 degrees off. Also, some things were in the wrong sequence, etc. Finally, in





July 1993, it rolled out of the shop on it's own power.

What a beauty and just in time to get back to the Roadster Factory Party!! Yes in deed, it won 1st place in class!! Linda was there and feel she was just as proud as I!!

It was show time from then on, from Arvada, CO to Asheville, NC, to Portland, ME and Canada!! Did you ever hear of the lowly Spitfire winning Best of Show? Well, this little fellow has won two Best of Show trophies, one in Canada and one in the states!! My first Best of Show was at the Canadian Classic (All Triumph) and I was very shocked, to say the least!! It came down to a very very nice TR3 and my Spit. We were tied, I won because mine had a full windshield washer bottle and the oil was right on full on the dip-stick!! That's how close it was!! Let me tell you, the judges went over my Spit with a fine tooth comb, even were under it with flash lights, opening and closing doors, hood, trunk, etc. The lowly and cheap Spitfire won!! I talked to the President of the club that put on the show the next and ask him how a Spitfire could win and he said "Bill, you had the best car on display!! Ask him if the big TR people had any comments and he said only a couple and they complain about every thing!! I'm sure you can imagine, I was on cloud nine the whole way to The Roadster Factory, where I think I also picked up 1st in class. I was then hooked on car shows and I'm sure you recognize that from the amount of trophies listed!! In total, it now is the proud owner of 41 trophies, two from each of the last six National's, Concours and Auto Cross. I just love to race it, even have a first place in the up to 1500cc class drag race at the Roadster Factory!!

Bragging, just a tad bit. Proud, just a tad bit. Elated, YES!! ■

SPECIFICATIONS:

Owners: Bill & Linda McDewitt

Club Affiliation: VTR., Kansas City Triumphs and British Automobile Club of Central Kansas

Our Purchase Date: Nov. 1989

Date Built: 15 June 1964, Date dispatched: 20 June 1964

Destination: Personal Export Delivery to: Lt. JG. D. E. Bush (USA)

As the Spitfire came off the Assembly Line:

Car/Chassis #: FC/33975-L, *Engine #:* FC/34656-HE, *Body #:* 32665/FC

Specification: LHD, North American Export

Colours, Exterior: Wedgwood Blue, *Trim:* Midnight Blue, *Hood (Top):* White

Other Numbers: British license plate number: DDU 647B, (Issued in Coventry in 1964)

Key numbers: FS908, FS893

Details of Equipment: Disc wheels, heater, windscreen washers, white tonneau cover, carpets, foot-operated dip switch and 5.20-13 whitewall tyres

Dealer Installed Options: Luggage rack, radio, bumper bars, twin mirrors and wheel beauty rings

National VTR Conventions

1994- Asheville, NC.- Concours: 1st Place in class, Autocross: 1st Place in Class

1995- Rockford, IL. - Concours: 1st Place in Class, Autocross: 2nd Place in Class

1996- Albany, NY. - Concours: 1st Place Senior, Autocross: 1st Place in Class

1997- Fort Worth, TX. - Concours: 1st Place Preservation, Autocross-1st Place in Class

1998- Hudson, WI. - Concours: 1st Place Preservation, Autocross-1st Place in Class

1999- Portland, ME. - Concours: 1st Place Preservation, Autocross- 2nd Place in Class

Canadian Classic (All Triumphs!!)

1995- Waterloo, ONT. - Concours: BEST of SHOW!!, 1st in Class, and Hard Luck Trophy

1996- Ottawa, ONT. - Concours: 1st Place in Class.

1998- Sarnia, ONT. - Concours: 1st Place in Class.

Roadster Factory Party

1993- Armaugh, PA. - Peoples Choice: 1st Place in Class.

1994- Armaugh, PA. - Peoples Choice: 1st Place in Class.

1995- Armaugh, PA. - Peoples Choice: 3rd Place in Class.

1996- Armaugh, PA. - Peoples Choice: 1st Place in Class.

1997- Armaugh, PA. - Peoples Choice: 1st Place in Class, Drag Race-1st in Class(1500cc)

1998- Armaugh, PA. - Peoples Choice: 2nd Place in class.

1999- Armaugh, PA. - Peoples Choice: 1st Place in Class.

Kansas City, MO.- All British Meet

(All are Peoples Choice)

1993 - 1st Place in Class.

1994 - 1st Place in Class.

1995 - 1st Place in Class.

1996 - 1st Place in Class.

1997 - Display Only, so others could win!!

1998 - 1st Place in Class.

1999 - 1st Place in Class.

Other Regional Shows

1994 - All British Day, Tulsa, OK.- Peoples Choice- 1st Place in Class.

1995 - All British Show, Oklahoma City, OK.- Peoples Choice- 1st Place in Class.

1995 - All British Meet, St. Louis, MO.- Peoples Choice- 1st Place in Class.

1995 - All British Day, Tulsa, OK.- Peoples Choice- 2nd Place in Class.

1996 - All British Meet, Nebraska City, NB.- *BEST OF SHOW* Peoples Choice.

1996 - All British Car Show, Oklahoma City, OK.- Concours- 1st Place in Class.

1997 - All British Meet, St. Louis, MO.- Peoples Choice- 1st Place in Class.

1999 - All British Conclave, Arvada, CO.- Peoples Choice- 1st Place in Class in the overall show and 1st Place in Class in a separate voting by the Rocky Mtn. Triumphs!!

Townsend, Tennessee

13TH ANNUAL BRITISH CAR GATHERING, MAY 6, 2000

PHOTOS BY ANGIE GOETHERT



First Place
Sue & Dave Snyder of Sterling Heights, Michigan, 1972 GT6

OTHER PARTICIPANTS

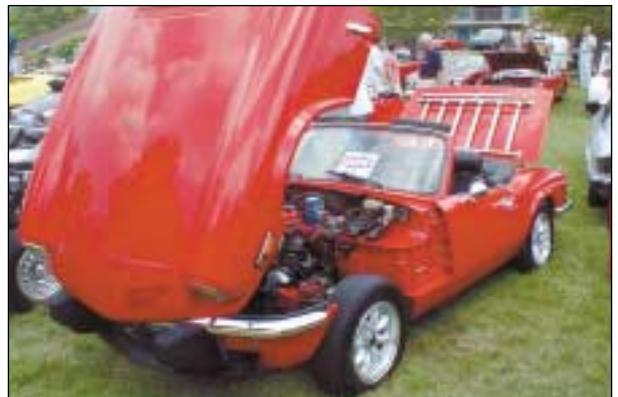
Ben Kacenas, White, '70
Jim Clark, Blue '76
Malcom Branch, Navy '79
Richard Lamparter, White '77
and another blue unidentified car
sorry

A SIGN ON THE WINDSHIELD OF THE THIS CAR:

"Bought in 1987 driven for 18 months then stripped down & totally rebuilt, finished in 1992. Modifications include 3:27 GT6 rear end, 9:5 to 1 pistons, HD clutch & rear spring. Silicone brake fluid, 72 bumpers. Trunk, Bonnet, & Doors came off of other cars. She is driven regularly during the good weather. She has been driven to Myrtle Beach (twice), Nashville, Asheville, Chattanooga plus many, many shorter trips. She has been very reliable for the 20,000 + miles since completion and is very enjoyable to drive. She is accompanied by a 1973 Spitfire which is a daily driver. The 73 has over 340,000 miles on her now! She has been driven daily since 1989. She has been rebuilt many times and has yet to leave me on the side of the road. Both of these cars are a hoot to drive. They keep me busy and broke and I wouldn't have it any other way!"



2nd Place
Bill Hall of Louisville Tennessee, 1978 1500 Spitfire



3rd Place
Larry Elswick of Pikeville, Kentucky, 1976 Spitfire 1500

Winter Park, Florida

16TH ANNUAL CENTRAL FLORIDA ALL BRITISH CAR AND CYCLE SHOW, APRIL 8, 2000

PHOTOS & STORY BY BOB MENZIES



Once every year, this quiet suburb of Orlando comes alive with the sound of finely tuned British sport cars. The setting is perfect. Tree shaded streets lead the way to the lake side park. Just follow any Jag or Triumph you see and you will get there. This year was no exception. The caravan of Triumphs making the drive from Tampa had great weather and little traffic.

As usual. Most of my time at the meet was spent among the Spitfire and GT6 contingent. Those of us here in Florida seem to all know each other, and relish the several times a year that we meet at the various shows around the state. But I have noticed an alarming trend over the last several years, especially at the Winter Park meet. WHERE ARE THE CARS? We of the Spit/GT6 persuasion are getting badly outnumbered at this show. There are always plenty of TR3's, 4's, 250's, and 6's, but for the last 2 years, there have been only 2 cars in the Spit/GT6 class. Actually, there were more Spits in the parking area than there were on the field, and I ended up talking to several more Spit/GT6 owners who didn't drive their cars at all. Some, like myself; have good reason not to drive their cars. (I drove shotgun in a TR3) In various stages of assembly or repair, but most seem to be under the impression that you must have a perfect car to enter it in a British Car Meet.

But to me, quite the opposite is true. The object of these shows is really just to get the cars on the road and to mingle with other car owners. And to show the general public that yes, these cars are still around and great fun to drive. And no, they don't have to be in perfect, 400 point condition to enjoy them. So lets all get the cars out there where they can be seen. And enjoyed. Because who knows when the time will come when a 12 year old boy will come up to you at a meet and say, "Boy, I really like your car! Flow do I get one?"

Now on to the field. Dick Shewell Drove his '69 GT6+ and took first in Class. And it was well deserved. Dick and his car have been a major influence in my life, what I judge every other car against. He did the restoration work himself, and it is a beautiful car. Gary Radice drove his '80 Spitfire, and was the only other car in the class. Gary is restoring the car while he drives it, and it is coming along beautifully. All that's left to be done is detailing under the bonnet.

The only other Spit on the field was in the race prepared class, which was Triumph dominated. As it should be. Harry Conner brought his '64 MkII. The car took 3 years to restore and bring to spec, and was raced from 1990 to '94, with logs from IISR, HRA, and SCCA outings. It is presently retired from duty, with occasional week-end drives and auto-crossing.

So as we enter yet another season of car meets and gatherings, lets all remember what these Spits really are. Great fun little cars that will never be made again. Lets show the public that they really do exist. ■



First Place
Dick Shewell, 1969 GT6+



Second Place
Gary Radice, 1980 Spitfire 1500

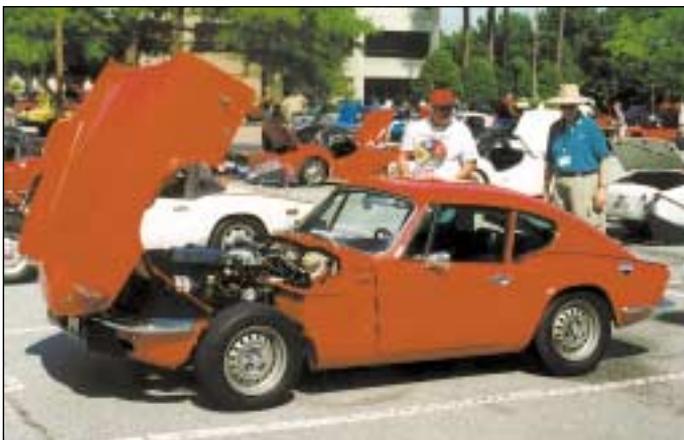


Second Place Race Division
Harry Conner, 1964 MkII

Richmond, Virginia

VINTAGE TRIUMPH REGISTER REGIONAL, JUNE 12-15, 2000

PHOTOS BY RALPH JANNELLI



First Place Concours
Tom Beaver, 1973 GT6



Second Place Concours
Ralph Jannelli, 1965 MkII



First Place Participants Choice Mk1-3 Class
Buddy Aiello, 1968 Mk3 Spitfire



First Place Participants Choice Mk4-1500 Class
David Allen, 1973 Mk4 Spitfire



Second Place Participants Choice Mk4-1500 Class
Charlie Brown, 1972 Mk4 Spitfire



OTHER PARTICIPANTS

Bob Harris, White '76
Charles Edmonson White 1500 '76
Raymond & Pat McCaskey Green, '76
Bob & Fran Hardy, Red '78
Don Burns, White '80

Atwell Haines, Red '79
Randy Dunn, Burgundy '73
Glen Larson, Green '77
Jeff & Becky Payne Green 1500 '78

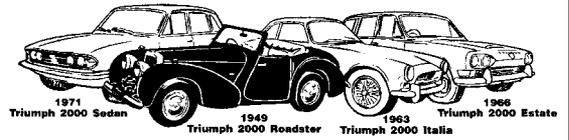
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Southeast Regional Convention

hosted by
Central Florida Triumph Register
October 26-29, 2000
Lake City, Florida



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Early!

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Oviedo, Florida 32765



Registrations postmarked by September 17, 2000 will be eligible for a drawing for one night of free lodging!

Battle of the Brits 2000

All English Car & Motorcycle Show

Presented by
**The Detroit Triumph
Sports car Club &
The Metro Triumph Riders**

Sunday September 10, 2000

Freedom Hill Park, Sterling Heights, Michigan
Call 810-979-4875 or www.detroittriumph.org



the vintage triumph register

Convention 2000

presented by the Portland Triumph Owners Association

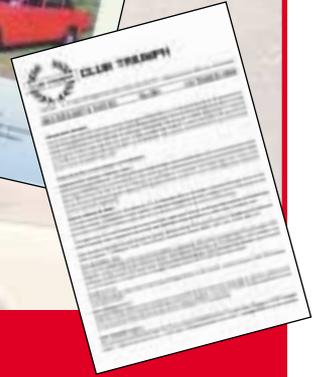
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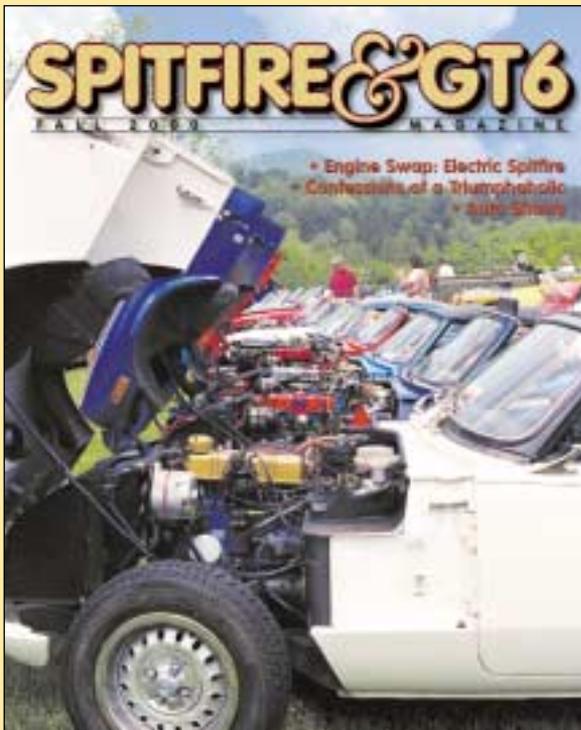
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British Car Shows and Events

AUGUST

Oregon, Portland, Aug 2-6

Vintage Triumph Register National Convention, Portland Triumph Ass., (503) 357-5640. raymarty@teleport.com

Massachusetts, Westminster, Aug 4-6

British Motorcars of the NE Festival, 401-539-2879, frankk@intap.net

Michigan, Chicago, Aug 4-6

Chicago Historic Races Gingerman Rcw.

Michigan, Waterford Hills Raceway, Aug 5-6

Waterford Hills Racing Meadow Brook Historic Races

Ohio, Dayton, Aug 5

British Car Day 2000, MG Car Club, SW Ohio Centre & Miami Valley Triumphs, 937-293-2819

Indiana, Indianapolis, Aug 6-10

Austin Healey Conclave 2000, (317) 773-8676

Pennsylvania, Glenside, Aug 6

Greater Glenside Chamber of Commerce, 215-886-4609

Pennsylvania, Armagh, Aug 11-13

The Roadster Factory Summer Party 2000 & 4th annual MG Drive-In, MG Drivers Club, Ph/Fax: (800) 234-1104

Pennsylvania, Valley Forge, Aug 16-20

Austin Healey Sports and Touring Club's Encounter, Austin Healey Sports and Touring Club, 215-699-8355

California, Monterey, Aug 17-20

GR Monterey Historics, Laguna Seca Raceway

Illinois, Abingdon, Aug 17-19

Abingdon MG Summer Party, (847) 658-2364

Canada, British Columbia, Aug 18-20

Concours, Rally and Slalom, Canadian Jaguar and MG Club, 604-465-7244

Iowa, Davenport, Aug 19-20

Heartland Auto Fest, Quad City British Auto Club

New York, Nunda, Aug 25-27

Sports car festival 2000, S&J Classics and Kiwanis of Nunda

Pennsylvania, Rothsville, Aug 27

Taste of Britain British Car Show and Polo Match, Lancaster County MG Club

SEPTEMBER

Florida, Sebring, Sept. 3

SCCA/CFR Vintage Races

New York, Watkins Glen, Sept. 6-10

SVRA Vintage Grand Prix

Oklahoma, Hallett Mtr. Racing Circuit, Sept. 9-10

CVAR Hallett Vintage Races

New Jersey, Dover, Hamilton Business Park, Sept. 9

Moss Motors show and parts flea market, 973-361-9358

Connecticut, Manchester, Sept. 10

20th Annual CTR British Motorcar Gathering, Connecticut Triumph Register

Illinois, Des Plaines, Sept. 10

14th Annual Chicagoland British Car Festival, British Car Union, (708) 442-7386

Michigan, Sterling Heights, Sept. 10

18th Annual Battle of the Brits, Detroit Triumph Sports car Club, (810) 979-4875

Vermont, Stowe, Sept. 14-17

British Invasion, Michael F. Gaetano, (508) 497-9655

Georgia, Dillard, Sept. 15-17

2000 Southeastern MG Festival, Peachtree MG Registry

Florida, Moroso Motorsports Park, Sept. 16-17

SCCA/FR Vintage Races

California, San Diego, Sept. 19-22

Triumphfest 2000, Triumph Sports Car Club of San Diego, (858) 484-1634, melkristie@cs.com

New York, Rochester, Sept. 20-24

Gathering of the Faithful Mk-70, New England MGT Register Ltd

Wisconsin, Road America, Sept. 22-24

Elkhart Lake Vintage Festival, VSCDA

California, Fresno, Sept. 23

8TH Annual - Very British Car & Motorcycle Meet, Valley British Auto Club

New York, Saratoga, Sept. 23

Northeast Sport and Classic Foreign Car Show, Adirondack Triumph Association

Indiana, Indianapolis, Sept. 29 - Oct. 1

Indy British Motor Days, Indiana British Car Union

W. Virginia, Summit Point Raceway, Sept. 29 - Oct. 1

7th Annual Blue-Gray Challenge, SVRA

California, Santa Monica, Sept. 30 - Oct. 1

Battle of Britain 2000 / Wings & Wheels, (800) 235-6954

California, Mare Island, Sept. 30 - Oct. 1

CSRG Vintage Grand Prix

Florida, Pensacola, Seville Square, Sept. 30

AACA Pensacola Antique Auto Show, Panhandle British Car Association, (334) 961-7171

OCTOBER

Texas, Bertram, Oct. 1

Mac's Pack Back Roads Tour Of Burnet Co., Mac's Pack

Alabama, Fairhope, Oct. 7

SABCC British Car Show

Virginia, Virginia Int. I. Rcw., Oct. 12-15

SVRA Races

Arizona, Phoenix Int. I. Rcw., Oct. 14-15

Phoenix Vintage Grand Prix, VARA

Virginia, Middleburg, Oct. 15

Hunt Country Classic, MG Car Club, Washington DC Centre

Georgia, Savannah, Roebling Road. Rcw., Oct. 19-22

HSR Savannah Historic Races

Florida, Tampa, Picnic Island, Oct. 21

14th Annual All British Field Meet, Tampa Bay Austin Healey Club

Florida, Lake City, Oct. 26-29

14th Annual Vintage Triumph Registry SE Regional, Central Florida Triumph Register Team 2000

Alabama, Florence, Oct. 28

Brits At The Renaissance Faire, North Alabama British Sports Car and Motoring Club

Alabama, Mobile, Oct. 28

Hooters All Marque Car Show

Florida, Sebring, Oct. 28-29

SCCA/CFR Vintage Races

NOVEMBER

New Jersey, Clinton, Nov 2-10

"MG Heritage Tour of the United Kingdom", M.G. Drivers Club of North America

California, Monterey, Laguna Seca Rcw., Nov 4-5

SF/SCCA Fall Classic Vintage

Nevada, Las Vegas Mtr. Spdwy., Nov 9-12

DeLorean Expo 2000, DeLorean Owners Association

Nevada, Las Vegas Mtr. Spdwy., Nov 10-12

BMW-Lotus Challenge, VARA

South Carolina, Charleston, Nov 10

Fall Flashback Rallye to Benefit Toys for Tots, British Car Club of Charleston

Florida, Homestead, Nov 18-19

SCCA/FR Vintage Races

Florida, Sebring, Nov 25-26

SCCA/CFR Vintage Races

DECEMBER

Florida, Daytona Int., Dec. 1-3

HSR Daytona Historics

Florida, Sebring, Dec. 29-31

SCCA/CFR Vintage Races

Europe

MARCH

England, London, Alexandra Palace, March 18-19
10th London Classic Motor Show, Tel: 01296 631181

England, Silverstone, March 20

TSSC Championship, Peterborough MC

England, Cadwell Park, March 28

TSSC Championship, MGCC

APRIL

England, Snetterton, April 25

TSSC Championship, Jaguar CC

MAY

England, Brands Hatch, May 2

TSSC Championship, Aston Martin CC

JUNE

England, Pembry, June 13

TSSC Championship, Jaguar CC

JULY

England, Derbyshire, Chatsworth House, July 2

Club Triumph National Day, Club Triumph

Europe, Nordkapp, Norway - Cape Tarifa Spain, July 2

Cape to Cape Challenge 2000

England, Mallory Park, July 4

TSSC Championship, Aston Martin GC

England, Anglesey, July 17-18

TSSC Championship, Jaguar CC

England, Mallory Park, July 28-29

Triumph International Millennium Event, All Standard & Triumph Clubs

AUGUST

England, Cadwell Park, August 1

TSSC Championship, Jaguar CC

England, Croft, August 21-22

TSSC Championship, Aston Martin GC

SEPTEMBER

England, Oulton Park, Sept. 4

TSSC Championship, Jaguar CC

England, Zandvoort, Sept. 18-19

TSSC Championship, HARC

OCTOBER

England, Brands Hatch, Oct. 2-3

TSSC Championship, MGCC

England, Oct. 6-8

17th Round Britain Reliability Run

England, Donnington Park, Oct. 10

TSSC Championship, Aston Martin CC

Get listed!

If you would like your event listed here and on the TriumphSpitfire.com website, write to us at Spitfire Magazine, P.O. Box 30806, Knoxville, TN 37930 USA or post it online at www.TriumphSpitfire.com/Events.html

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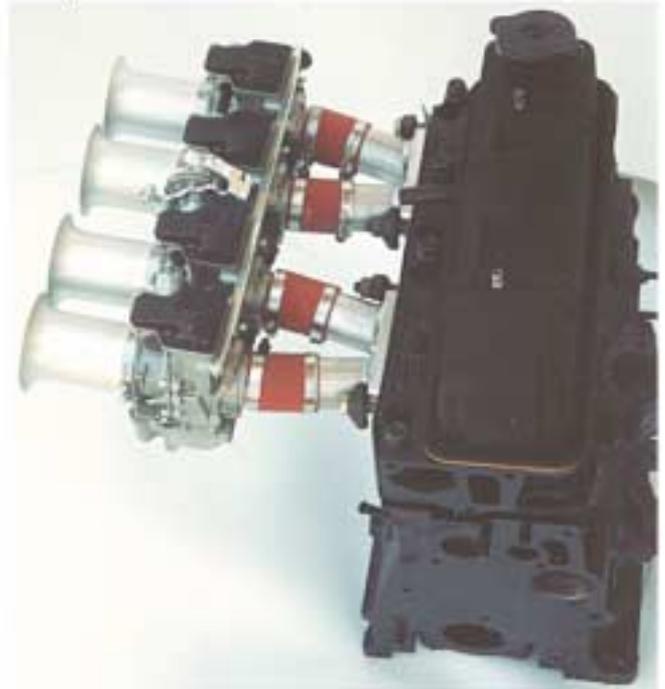


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