

# SPITFIRE & GT6

VOLUME 2, ISSUE #1

MAGAZINE

- The Most Successful Car Company Ever
- Interview with Bob Tullius
- Building a "SpitCat"
- Reader's Cars
- Tech Tips



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*from the editor*

**J**his is going to be a great year! I can just feel it!

I was looking at my calendar yesterday and realized how many events and shows there are in our area for British Cars. The calendar is littered with blue squares (our inner-office color for something fun and/or out of town). And this year we will be making a great effort to visit as many as possible.



It will be great to finally meet so many of you face to face. I have talked with thousands on the phone or via email for such a long time but don't really know you all.

**Rolling out of the garage under its own power for the first time in ten years!**

The one big event that will be of interest will be held on the 4th of July. Tom chose that date to give away the GT6 because of the irony of our independence from the British so long ago. Cute Tom.

I was talking to some friends in the North American Spitfire Squadron (NASS) about the event recently. During this time many were working on setting up area NASS events and everything started clicking. If we wanted to have a Southeastern event, why not have it at the GT6 giveaway. Area Spitfire and GT6 owners were going to be in town for that anyway. It was the perfect fit.

While details of the first ever "Spit-together" are sketchy, things are will be worth the trip to Knoxville. We are working on our end to plan and invite, NASS is working on their end and everything should meet in the middle with a wonderful get-together. And hopefully many Spits and GT6's will be there for a "mini" car show. I know there will be at least 2 there; my Spit Kermit and a "brand new" GT6 driven away by one of you. Keep checking back to [TriumphSpitfire.com](http://TriumphSpitfire.com) and the NASS website (<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/nass>) for frequent updates about the weekend and information.

And this being event season, be sure to take lots of pictures and get the names of the participants of any and all events you attend. We love showing off your cars as much as you do!

  
John Goethert  
editor

p.s. This issue has a lot of great information sent in by folks from all over the world. I can't thank you all enough! Keep it coming and we look forward to meeting you on the 4th!

# SPITFIRE & GT6

Volume 2, Issue 1

MAGAZINE

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A special thanks goes to  
Robert Harrington Photography  
for the cover and contents photos.

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To send anything Spitfire or GT6 related to  
info@triumphspitfire.com

or  
P.O. Box 30806, Knoxville, TN USA 37930-0806



**LOST LOVE**

Dear John,

Andy Gascoigne, in issue 4, was exactly right in regretting the sale of a Spitfire. I bought a brand new 65 MK2 in Washington DC, took it with me to New Zealand and sold it in 1969 when I got married. I saw the car again in Wellington in 1972 but then returned to Texas. If you have any readers in New Zealand that have spied a 65 MK2 with left-hand drive, drop me an e-mail. By the way, my wife just let me buy a 64 MK1 which is now in a thousand pieces as I'm doing a bare-frame restoration. May the "Spit" gods smile on my effort!

Joel Moore  
Grand Prairie,  
TX txkiwi@dellepro.com

**NO MORE SWAPS**

Dear John:

Congratulations on your latest issue, which looks good. I wish you the best in your publication. I'm sure you will find a ready audience.

Spitfires have been a part of my life for nearly thirty years now. At the tender age of 14 (yes, 14!), I purchased my very first new car, a 1972 Triumph Spitfire Mark IV, from Butler-Welch Imports in Indianapolis. After 28 years and way, way over 100,000 miles together, we're still joined at the hip. I wouldn't have it any other way.

Now then, one comment: I appreciate the reader's stories and look forward to more of them. It's nice to know that Spitfire enthusiasm remains so strong even though the marque has been gone from these shores for well-nigh twenty years now. But please, gentlemen, please, no more engine swap stories. From the outset, the Spitfire was engineered to handle the torque loads and stresses of a four-cylinder engine of modest output. At the most, the Spitfire's designers and engineers saw six cylinder's worth of power as being the outer limits of the model. Why then, is there so much interest placed

upon stuffing small block Chevis and such into the poor thing?

Candidly, if Triumph engineers had wanted to build a Spitfire with a V-6, a V-8 or (you were kidding, right?) thirteen electric batteries, they would have, particularly if they were eating handfuls of LSD every morning for breakfast.

If your readers want to have a Cobra or a Corvette, then by all means let them ante up the money to buy one. But please, don't encourage any more bastardizing of our precious and irreplaceable Little British Cars.

Good luck and thanks for a quality publication.

With regards,  
Greg Perigo

**ANOTHER VIEW**

Hi John,

I'm writing in response to Ted Shumacher's article on Spitfire handling in Issue #4. First, this letter is not a direct assault on Ted's overall knowledge, or to his dedication in helping owners of vintage British cars. I've been a fan of his business for a long time. I only have a small problem with his otherwise very good article. Had he just stated that he didn't recommend the use of air shocks I would have probably let it pass. Everyone is entitled to an opinion. But, by emphatically proclaiming "No way", he does disservice to Spitfire owners looking for a solution.

I may or may not have been the first one to adapt Corvette air shocks to the rear end of my Spitfire. I did the conversion back around 1992. After riding on those Monroe shocks for about a year, I wrote a club newsletter article describing what was involved to do the change-over. A couple of years ago the VTR posted an updated version of that article on their web site.

Ted was correct in the fact that air shocks do aid the springs. The air chamber, or bladder, surrounds the dampening mechanism of the shock and acts independently of the dampening action. You do not "lose what the shock is supposed to do". If they did, these products wouldn't even be on the market. Think of all the

larger, heavier vehicles on which these shocks are used. He didn't elaborate on what he meant by "trade-off", so I can't comment further on that.

If I was going to prepare a Spit as an all-out race car, yes I would de-arch the spring and use a good competition shock. But, for the normal driver, the air shocks are still a good option for correcting a sagging rear end and maintaining proper caster. Over the years, I've autocrossed my car many times on those same Monore shocks. I must add here, I do also have a rear anti-sway bar. I've also got my fair share of VTR autocross plaques, including an FTD, and a few local awards against newer machines. My air shocks work just fine.

This conversion is not for everyone. I've had some people write and thank me for the information. I've had a couple of people tell me the didn't care for the ride...the extra support will stiffen the ride. Until someone can sort out a fiberglass spring conversion, I'll continue to "run what I bring"

Charlie Brown

**GOODBYE TO A FELLOW SPIT OWNER**

Sirs,

Thank you for a great magazine. I enjoyed logging on to the NASS and Spitfire.com websites.

I own two projects that may become exemplary automobiles some day. I love the Spitfire so much that I had to buy a couple. They are a unique British sports car. Please send me another year of the magazine. I will some day get you the articles and pictures I promised. I have over committed myself to projects and am running behind.

Sadly, I posted the notice of the death of John E. Clark. John and I met while "cruising" with the local hot rods here in Dayton. Our Spitfire squadron formed as a flight of three in the early '90's. John's car was a 1978 model. The top has never been off the little butterscotch beauty. He competed with all kinds of cars in various

shows. He won a few. I will miss him. Visit the Miami Valley Triumph Club's website for photos of John's car.

R. Lee Wakefield  
Anglo-American, Spit fan

**GETTING SAUCED**

I received an order from a customer in Atlanta today (I make hot sauce, "Spitfire Sauce"). He informed me that my sauce was mentioned in your magazine, would it be possible to mail me a copy, thank you.

Dan Stevens  
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John,

Just wanted to let you know that I ordered a bottle of that "Spitfire Sauce". THAT STUFF IS HOT!!!!

Wow is about the only word that comes to mind. I consider myself to be somewhat of a connoisseur of hot sauces, but that stuff is powerful. I wonder if you could use it as a gas additive....hrmm.....

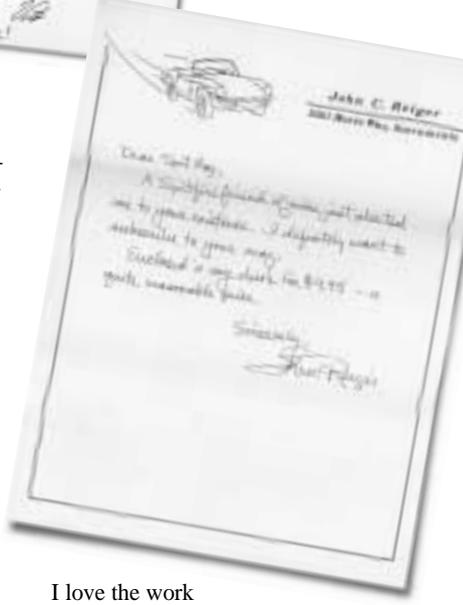
Jeremy Whitehead

**HIGH FLYING SPITFIRE**

Dear John,

I really enjoy your magazine as I own a 76 Triumph Spitfire 1500. To date, I have thrown out the Prince of Darkness and installed a new wire harness. No more points either; I went with Crane Cams electronic ignition and a 10,000 volt coil; much more reliable! I rebuilt the complete brake system; master cylinder, wheel cylinders, shoes, pads, rotors and all new pins and springs (no matter how fast you go, you still have to stop). As I live in Montana at 6,000+ feet above sea level, I found it necessary to use a K&N air filter to let her breathe. Now my Spitfire (aka Sweet Thing) can just zoom over the Bear Tooth Mountain pass, elevation 11,000 feet, with no sweat! As other Spitfire owners, Sweet Thing is a hobby and a work in process. Maybe in the future I will detail one of my projects.

Jim Connor  
Yellowstone National Park



**MAGAZINE LETTERS**

Hi John!

Another great issue-that's a whole year, each issue better than the last. Congratulations! "At ease men, smoke 'em if ya got 'em!"

And I loved the reports on the different shows around the country. Well, except for one thing-no report on Triumphest 2000? There was a really nice turnout of Spitfires and GT6s. I had the pleasure of meeting "Smedley" and "Triumph Trevor" and their drivers. And also meeting Joe Curry and Rod Travis and his brother in law - who was there with his newly acquired Spitfire, vowing to be back next year in show trim. (Ah, new recruits!)

Oh, and Nigel broke 100 pts! YES!!! I started planning for Triumphest 2001 (in Ventura, CA) as soon as I got home.

Never too early to plan! There was also British Wings and Wheels at the Santa Monica Museum of Flying. It was special as it was the 60th anniversary of the Battle of Britain. Nigel and I had a great time. I made little cling on 'decals' that were little "MG" emblems to put on the fender as "kills". On the door, under the window, I had "Spitfire Pilot L. 'G-Force' Gharazeddine" and a display of Spitfire/Spitfire memorabilia. My efforts were rewarded with an award from the RAF Benevolence for spirit of the Battle of Britain! Really an honour!

If you would like any info or photos of any of these things-or upcoming so. Cal. events, I'll be glad to get it together. Oh, and by the way, my club is the host club for Tri-fest 2001-and it's going to be great!

Happy trails-and keep up the good work,  
*Laura G. -and Nigel*

John

I just received the fourth issue of the magazine (1/30/01). It just continues to get better. You and your staff are publishing a magazine that should become the Spitfire standard publication.

The number of Spitfire pic-

tures in the fourth issue is mind boggling. I had assumed that attrition had whittled the numbers down. Your publication provides us with a larger sense of community. I had always thought that my modified 1964 Spitfire (The Beast) was highly unique; but, this issue demonstrates that others have taken the Spitfire to new extremes: A four wheel drive Spitfire, one powered by a Jag V-12, etc.

The Beast's claim to fame would now be that it is the grandfather, or at least one of the first, of the extremely modified Spitfires - having been on the road with a V-8 30 years ago.

The pages of the magazine show that the number of beautifully restored Spitfires is very large. Owners have demonstrated great skills and dedication. May the Spitfire live forever!

*Dave West*  
[www.westpro.com/Beast.html](http://www.westpro.com/Beast.html)

Thanks again. I really do commend you on your publishing efforts, for a couple of reasons. There is a very loyal segment of sports car enthusiasts out here who feel that the Spit and GT6 have been lost in the shuffle, set off to the side in favor of more 'newsworthy' models. Given that these cars are so under appreciated, it's not surprising that the affection felt for them has been similarly underestimated. You are making an attempt to address that situation--successfully, needless to say--and the rapid growth of your publication attests to that fact.

I'm sure nearly everyone who writes says the same thing but, as the cliché goes, keep up the good work!

*Bob*

Congratulations on issue #4!

It has some very useful articles to owners, restorers, like me. In one issue you have taken much of the mystery out of camber compensators, swing springs, and explained the basics of constant velocity carburetion! Handling improvements, transmission rebuild, too. Well written and very helpful. I particularly applaud the nuts and bolts of "how to do it" articles

written in plain English, accompanied by clear drawings, and absent the assumption that the reader understands jargon, abbreviations, or has significant familiarity with the subject or task at hand. I hope you will be able to continue presenting such useful information in the same user friendly style in subsequent issues. Finally, kudos for your move into Midgets & Sprites. I like those too!

*Thanks,*  
*Bob Allred*  
*Riverton, Utah*

Hi,

My name is Doug Clarkson, I live in Temperance MI. I have a couple of photos attached that I would love to show off. Sometime soon I would also like to right you a short story about my car.

Your magazine is a blast to read, and the photos are great. Keep putting lots of photos in it, I think like me people love to see other peoples cars.

*Doug Clarkson*  
*1970 GT6+*  
*Temperance MI.*

Hey John,

Just wanted to let you know that I received the 4th edition of the Spit/GT6 magazine. I read it from cover to cover and it was wonderful. I just wanted to compliment you on the quality of the articles and the printing. It's really nice to have magazine that focuses on our unique cars.

*Thanks again,*  
*Keith May*

Hi John,

96 pages (Issue 4, Vol. 1).....fantastic! The articles and stories are great - you've made tremendous progress. Thanks for your hard work!

*Chip Krout*  
*'70 Spit Mk3*

I love the work that you guys are doing! It's the occasional injection of Triumph I need while I'm at school, away from my Spit.

The magazine is getting better and better!

*Cheers,*  
*Zach Zaletel*  
*70 Spitfire*

**Future Story Ideas**

Spitfire Magazine, In attempting to assemble a competition Spitfire from various pieces and components for several cars, one of the difficulties is the identification and availability of properly sized nuts, bolts, studs, etc.

Most specialty suppliers don't carry the nuts and bolts, even though they are shown in the parts diagrams. So... often I have to guess or make do, at the local nut & bolt supply for differential flange bolts, of example. Or rear spring attach studs, etc, etc.

If there was a definitive list or description of size and grade of fastener used, it would sure help this shade tree mechanic!

*Robert Allred*  
*Riverton Utah*

I would like to see an article explaining the emissions systems on the Spitfire. What does each item does, what can be removed, what shouldn't be and the effects on performance.

*Ian Franklin*

**Let us know what you think.**  
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# Book Review



## Spitfire 69-80 Owners Workshop Manual

By Brooklands Books, 185 pages, \$15, £10

This great little “glove box” sized book falls in between the Haynes and Factory workshop manuals in thoroughness and quality of explanations with the same basic chapters as the both.

One of the major strengths of this book is its superb illustrations. There are many and each is well marked with a key clearly showing the names of each part. This clears up many questions brought about by beginner and novice “mechanics” when reading the Haynes manual especially when there are English/American differences in part naming.

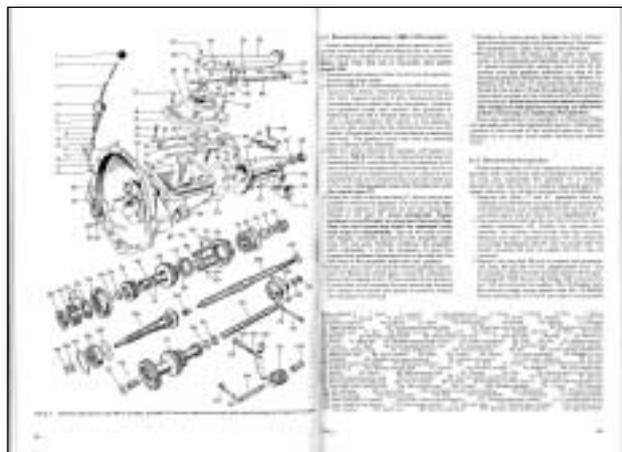
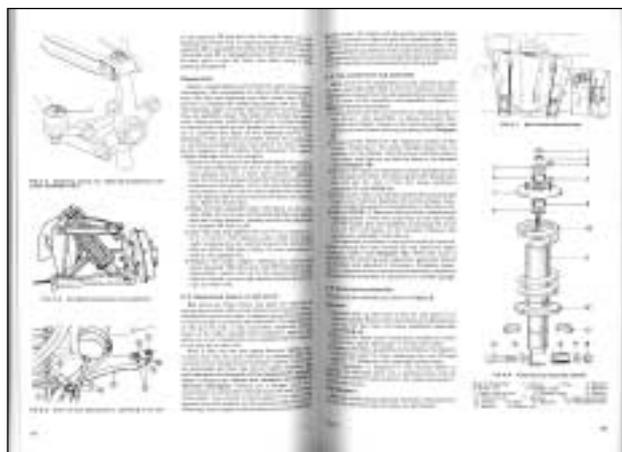
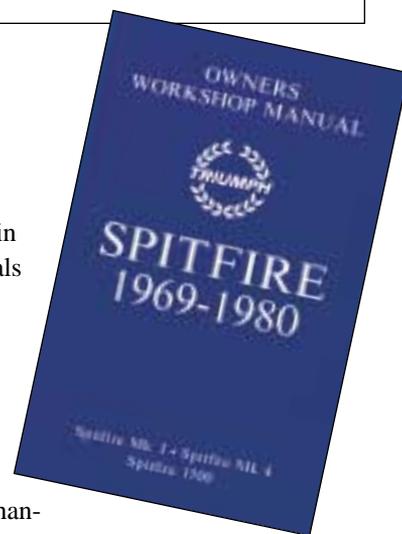
Another strength is, like the Haynes, is it has troubleshooting within each chapter. It gives lists of problems and the most obvious reasons. It doesn't list every solution especially the really obscure ones that arise on cars of this age, it does give great places to start looking.

This manual has a wonderful body chapter. The Haynes should be ashamed; this book has many more diagrams and more detailed descriptions.

The only negative I could see is that it is not as in-depth as the Factory Workshop Manual. This is probably due to the lack of room in its small size. I would not trust it to have all the technical specs required while rebuilding an engine but I do own a Factory Manual to rely upon.

Another possible negative is that most of the illustrations usually are of Mk3's. While this would be extremely helpful to the Mk3 owner as other manuals tend to limit that model, I happen to own “square tail” cars. It does show both in areas but when space is limited, the Mk3 wins out. An example would be the dash part & removal diagrams only showing righthand drive Mk3 parts.

The Owners Workshop Manual is a great “next step” book especially if you have limited money to spend or own a Mk3. ■



# Spitfire Spotters

In the Spring 2001 issue of *Forbes*' "Best of the Web" edition the Spitfire gets a mention. The magazine periodically reviews web-sites in specific categories and in the Collectible Cars section, the reviewer searches for Spitfire at ClassicGarage.com.



"I have just read in a paper that in an interview with in the English music magazine *Q*, Rod Stewart said in the early 1960's it was his ambition to own a Triumph Spitfire."

Mark Facer



In the April issue of *Motocross Action Magazine* pg. 67 "The Power of the Recall". The magazine starts ripping on British cars the Spitfire, in particular all the recalls that came along with it.

Joshua Swann



In the start of the movie "Almost Famous", the camera was driving through a neighborhood in supposedly San Diego. A brief shot of the rear of a red Round Tail Spit can be spotted!

## SPITFIRE ALE'S 'BOTTLE OF BRITAIN' ADVERTS CLEARED OF RACISM

Shepherd Neame came under fire over five posters advertising Spitfire ale, launched to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Battle of Britain. The "Bottle of Britain" campaign played on the theme of cultural rivalries with Germany.

The Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) received a total of 19 complaints that the posters were racist or offensive to gay people. Some claimed the first four adverts were insulting to visiting or resident Germans and their hosts and others contended the phrase "rear gunners" on the other poster was a derogatory term for gay men.

One complainant said the fourth poster implied straight men were more masculine than gay men and Spitfire ale would enhance drinkers' masculinity.

However, the ASA ruled it was just harmless humour. A spokesman for the ASA said: "We do not consider the posters disparage Germans because they are quite obviously just intended to be funny. "We do not believe the term "rear gunners" is likely to be interpreted as a reference to gay men or that it would cause serious offense to readers who did interpret it in that way."

A spokesman for Shepherd Neame said: "The campaign merely reflected an aspect of British cultural history and used humour similar to that in the television comedy *Dad's Army*. To uphold the complaints would be an overzealous act of political correctness." ■





## GETTING FIRED

Howard Baugues sent us these photos of a project he recently completed. "The local water garden club in which I am a member has some type of art class every March, conducted by Linda Hill, middle school art teacher. This year's class was on painting ceramic tiles. My wife and I decided to participate. While most members planned on painting water lilies, frogs or fishes, I had something else in mind.

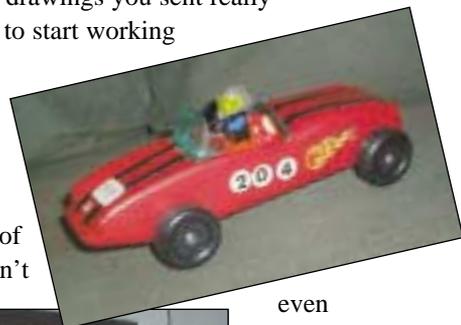
We were each given 4 tiles 6" x 6". We used carbon paper to trace our designs onto the tiles. I did paint one tile with a fantail goldfish and one with a water lily, but the other two were aimed toward my other hobby, my SPITFIRE! As you can see, one tile is a picture of my Spitfire, and the other is the logo that appears on the triumphspitfire.com site. When painting the tiles, it is sometimes difficult to envision what the final product will look like. The glazes change when fired. Also, the color is dependent upon how many coats of paint you apply. The blue of the "Triumph" was much lighter and richer before firing, but turned a dark blue when finished. The Spitfire was a dull pink while painting, but turned a bright red after firing. I am pleased with the results."



## SPITWOOD DERBY

I recently received email from a Denise Hurt, a mother looking for Spitfire photos as a pattern for her son's pinewood derby car.

"I believe his was the only British car represented. He even made it as a right hand drive compete with rollbar and wire wheels! Here's a picture of him with the car. Thanks again for all your help. The drawings you sent really motivated him to start working on the car. He had finished making his car a full two weeks before the race, most of his friends hadn't



even started their cars until the week of. The race went OK, he didn't win anything, but had a lot of fun."

Have heart Devon, many of us that own "real" Spitfires don't win races either.

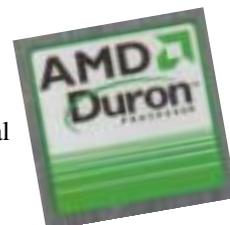
## eBay Watch

This pink Mk4 was recently listed on eBay as "Barbie Car." Along with the eye-catching paint, the interior panels and dash are white vinyl topped off by seats sporting tiger stripe seat covers.



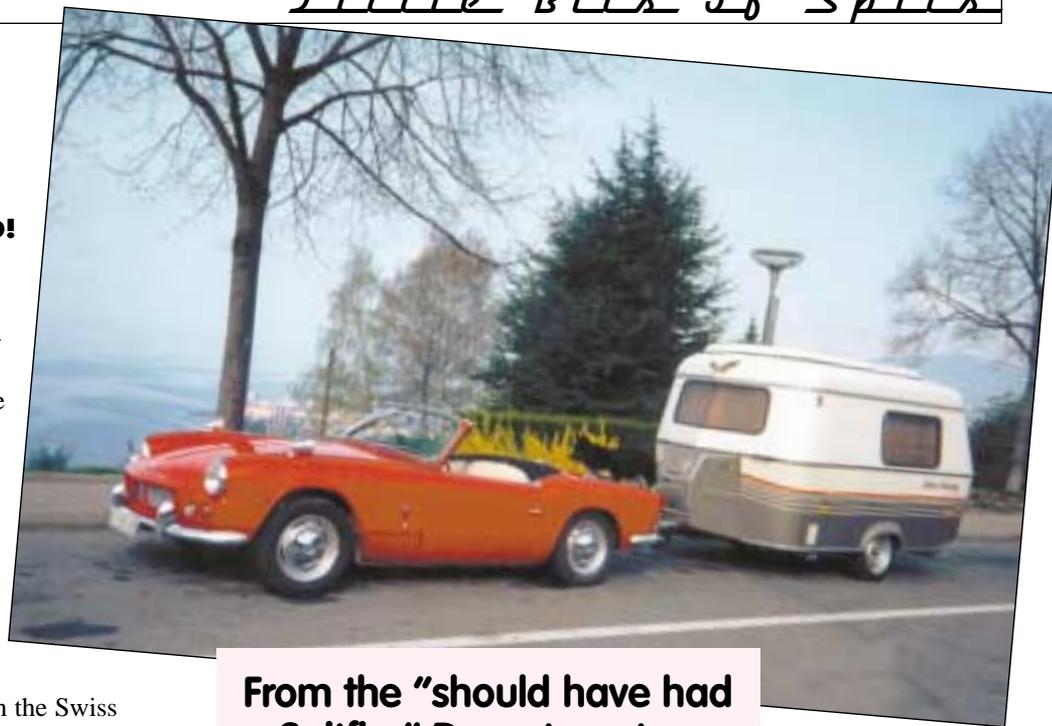
## AMD TAKES AIM AT INTEL WITH SPITFIRE!

Advanced Micro Devices Inc. will soon rival Intel Corp in computer processor speed. AMD's new chip, internally known as Spitfire is "code-named after the sports car with the aim of overpowering Intel's Celeron chip in the value-PC space -- generally defined as PCs costing less than \$1,000." AMD is expected to release Spitfire at four clock speeds: 550MHz, 600MHz, 650MHz and 700MHz. Now that's horsepower! Let's just hope they aren't getting help from Lucas.



**TOWING, NOT BEING TOWED!**

Stephan Sieburg of the Swiss Spitfire Club sent us this photo of a Spitfire 4 owned by Kurt and Verena Zaugg of Wabern, Switzerland. "I think the trailer is quite funny. I have never seen a Spitfire towing one and although the trailer is of a newer date (1990) it somehow fits perfectly to the small Spitfire." The weight of the trailer is 550 kg, and the Spitfire is allowed to tow up to 600 kg. Kurt bought his Spitfire in 1986 and drove about 50,000 km



since then, mainly in the Swiss Alps from one caravan park to the other. The car still has its 1147cc engine but improved have been made by fitting an oil cooler and an electric fan, "just in case, because towing such a weight over mountain passes can be a lot of work for a Spitfire."



**SUPERCHARGED SPIT?**

By now we all have heard of the Spitfire name being on a hot sauce bottle and a lighter fluid, but this one is new to us. I wonder how well it cleans oil spots in the driveway?

**SUPERCHARGED SPIT?**

We are looking into information we received via email this past quarter. Hopefully soon we can update you with an article in the next issue: Tom,

*Hello my name is Craig Hillyer I am trying to get a feel for how much of a demand there would be for a supercharger kit for the 1500 Triumph Spitfire. The supercharger kit is being thought of, designed and manufactured by Hi-Flow performance in Australia. If you know of any demand for a kit such as this please e-mail me back and let me know.  
Thanks,  
Craig Hillyer*



**From the "should have had a Spitfire" Department**

**Princess Anne** was fined £400 (\$670) for her FOURTH speeding offense a few weeks ago - but was 100 miles from court because she was opening a police station. The Princess Royal pleaded guilty by post after she was clocked at 93mph driving a hired Bentley Turbo.

And as JPs considered her punishment Anne found herself being shown around cells at a new £16million police HQ in Derby. She was chauffeured there in a Jag. She also got a taste of life on the wrong side of the law as she met inmates at young offenders' institute near Lichfield, Staffs.

In addition, Anne was also ordered to pay £30 (\$50) in costs.

*-John Askill & Chris Pharo*



**Ex-Spice Girl Geri Halliwell** was banned from driving for six weeks this March for speeding at double the speed limit north of London. The singer also was ordered to pay a £350 (\$580) fine and £30 in costs by the Watford Magistrates Court.

Halliwell, appearing under her full name, Geraldine Estelle Halliwell, admitted driving her Aston Martin DB7 at 60 mph in a 30 mph zone near Watford.

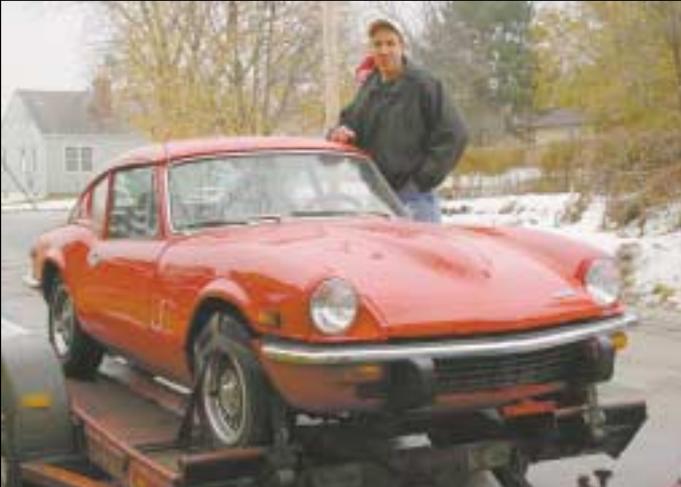
*-Associated Press*



# Reader's Cars

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

Igal Maasen, Georgia, USA, 1972 GT6 Mk 3



Bernard West, Leics, UK, 1978 1500



Christine Pedretti, Minnesota, USA, 1970 Mk3



Otto Kemp's, North Carolina, USA, 1972 Mk3 "Rumble Bee" and Kenny's Spitfire 2500 (TR6 6 cylinder)



Satoshi Kimura, Tokyo Japan, Spitfire 4



Susan Hensley, Texas USA, 1968 Mk3



Dan Hunt, Wisconsin, USA 1973 Mk4

Mike A. Japp, Florida, USA, 1977 1500



Parker Bowab, Alabama, USA, 1976 1500



Mike Ross, Ohio, USA, 1966 Mk2



Dean Ecclesstone, Ohio, USA 1976 1500

John Schroth, Ohio, USA, 1976 1500



Mark Facer, Hawes North Yorks, U.K. 1976 1500



Rinus Noordam, Holland, 1978 1500

# Reader's Cars

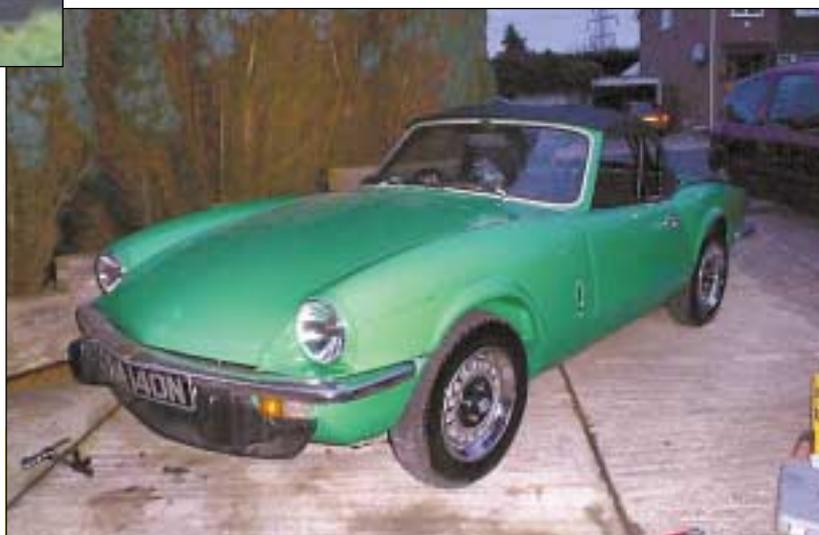
Bob Beaulieu, Massachusetts, USA, Mk2



John Goethert, Tennessee, USA, 1976 1500



Susan Hensley, Texas USA, 1967 Mk3



Simon Thomas, Swansea, Wales, 1975 1500



Bob Totten, 1964 SpitGT LeMans replica



Doug Clarkson, Michigan, USA, 1970 Mk2



Wayne & Deb, Michigan, 1976 1500



Stan Stavrou, Sidney, Australia, 1964 Mk1

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in next issue and on the  
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website, e-mail us a  
LARGE jpeg to  
[info@triumphSpitfire.com](mailto:info@triumphSpitfire.com)



Sandy Cilli,  
New Jersey,  
USA, 1964  
Mk1



Morgane Deleger, Paris, France, 1975 1500



Michael J. Thompson,  
North Carolina, USA 1973 Mk4



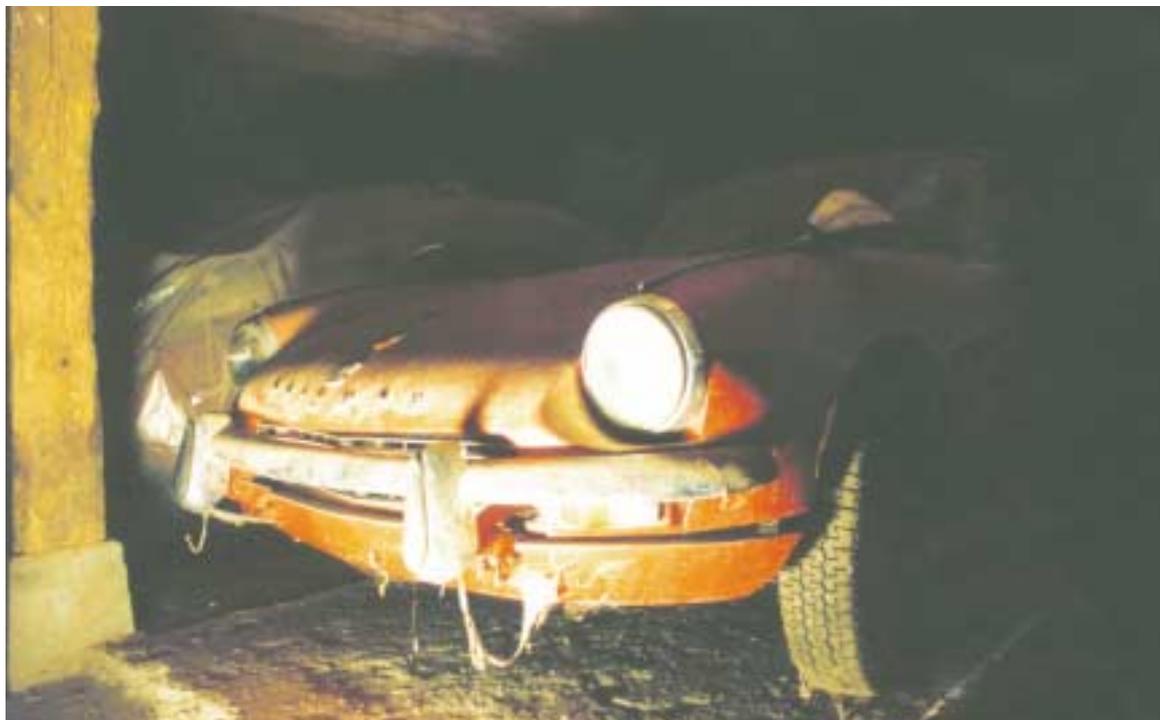
Richard Kozicki,  
Georgia, USA, 1974 1500



Lars Pernehed, Norrköping, Sweden, 1969 Mk3

# 17 Year Rest

BY STEPHAN SIEBURG, SWITZERLAND



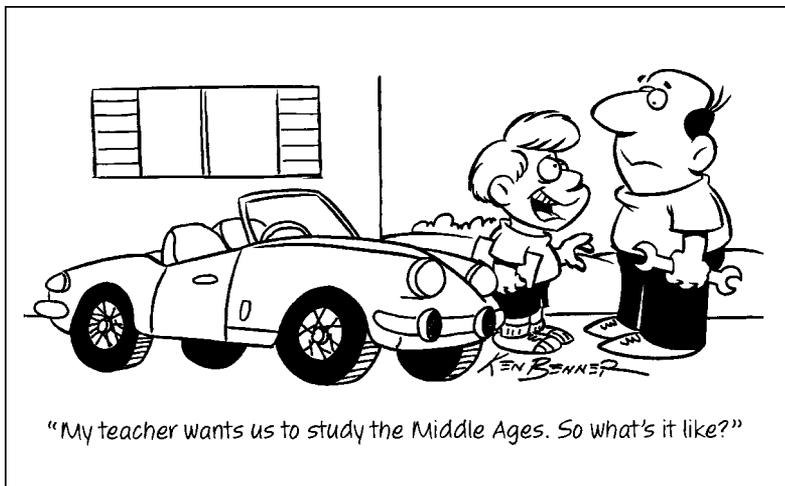
Stefan Bilger of Mettlen, Switzerland receives the “special find” of the magazine. While talking with a friend at a Swiss Spitfire Club meeting, the friend mentioned that he had a 1967 Mk3 stored in his barn. He went on to say that he bought it for about \$250.00 at the time. It

was his very first Spitfire, even his very first car - today he owns several Triumphs.

Stefan purchased the Spit for about \$900.00 and is now restoring the car not only back to the original but also to perfection.

From the beginning of the restoration he found that the car was far from perfect. The car had a MK II engine, so he went to John Kipping in Coventry, England and bought the correct MK III engine. The other one he kept for spare parts. The clutch is also completely new.

After the body was sandblasted Stefan found that the car had a minor accident in the front. So all metal panels have since been replaced. The car had many repairs not up to Stefan's standards such as the unprofessional way a previous owner used sheet metal welded over rotten metal. Other than the body and engine the car is very original and looks to turn out fine once the restoration is complete. We hope to see it on the road again soon! ■



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# 2001: A Triumph Odyssey

BY IGAL MAASEN, ATLANTA GEORGIA



I love my 1967 GT6 - I really do. I love the rounded body styling, the deep red color, the way it feels as I slide/fall into the driver's seat and even the smell of the aged (okay, musty) interior. What I don't love, however, is the fact that currently my beloved GT sits in the corner of my garage in the automotive equivalent of a coma. This is not the story of a long time Triumph owner who has enjoyed many years of cruising about town in his favorite "toy". Instead this is the story of a brand new owner of what is politely being referred to as a "project" and how I managed to find myself in possession of this little British jewel. But before I go any farther, let me back up and start from the beginning.

Early in 1968, a young couple living in Kansas City, Missouri decided to purchase, new from the lot, a 1967 GT6. This couple would later

become my parents. For a few years, things were good. Being the prior owners of a TR3, my dad and mom (well, really just my mom) had already become smitten with Triumphs and enjoyed driving this sporty model around town. However, as anyone who has owned a Triumph knows, sooner or later, things start to break down. In my parents case, it was problem after problem which finally let to the Triumph taking up residence in their garage.

In 1978 the family decided to relocate to Cleveland. Being brave souls (or just too stubborn to sell the GT and get something else), the Triumph was driven/pushed onto the moving truck, carried to the new house and then rolled into the garage where it promptly took up permanent residence. Even now, the last inspection sticker on the car is from Kansas City and is dated

1978, showing that the Triumph never moved from the garage in the three years we lived in Ohio.

As 1981 rolled around, it was decided that we would move back to Missouri, opting for St. Louis this time. Once again, the Triumph was started up (not without some difficulty) to get it onto the moving truck and once again it was rolled into the new garage in St. Louis. This time, it would be 19 years before the GT6 again saw daylight.

At this point in my life (I was eight when we moved this last time), I had absolutely no interest in cars. As far as I was concerned, The Triumph was just something we stored junk on when it (the junk) wasn't nice enough to have in the house, but too nice to just throw away. However, as I got a little older, I began to appreciate the car a little more. When I was about thirteen, and in the full-blown "I can't wait to start driving" phase, I began to dream about fixing up the Triumph. It occurred to me that this would be a car that none of my friends had ever seen, much less might own. At the time, a friend and I would occasionally go down the basement and wash the car or open the hood and mess around - since neither of us knew anything about car repair. This went on for a while as both of us waited impatiently for the day to come when we would finally be old enough to get that magic slip of paper.

Years passed, the car aged and something funny happened to me. Somewhere along the line, I gave up interest in the Triumph and when my sixteenth birthday rolled around, it found me behind the wheel of a slightly used 1984 Pontiac Fiero. A few years later, I went off to college in Atlanta, GA., leaving my mom and Triumph in St. Louis. It wasn't until 2000 that I once again started to develop an interest in little British sports cars. Finally, after giving it much thought and somehow convincing my wife that it was a good idea, I called up my mom and asked how she would feel about my trying to revive the old girl after all these years. After getting the green light from both mom and my wife, I started feeling old excitement coming back. I could picture myself driving down the highways and back roads of Atlanta in that classic automobile. I began to flesh out the plan of attack for getting a car, which hadn't been moved in over two decades, across four states.

The first thing I realized was I would have to rent a truck and trailer. After doing some comparisons and getting advice from others who had

attempted this before, I decided to rent from a Ryder Truck dealer in St. Louis who had an auto trailer which was solid all the way across. This would eliminate the problem of the Triumph's unusually narrow width. The next hurdle was going to be getting the car out of the garage and onto the trailer. The biggest problem with this was the fact that the tires long ago had gone flat and I was assuming that they probably had dry rotted by now. Doing some searching on the internet, I located a British car restoration shop not far from my mom's house who put me in touch with a garage which had the correct machine to change the tires on wire wheels and who had the right size tires in stock. Problem solved (or so I thought). With all the planning done, and the promise of help from some friends in St. Louis once I got there, I figured everything was set. Oh boy, was I in for some surprises.

Taking three days off from work, I headed out and completed the 560-mile trip to St. Louis without incident. With a limited amount of time to get everything done, I started working on the Triumph right away. The first thing I noticed was there was considerably more body rust than I remembered. Both of the side panels and the driver's side floor panel were completely rusted through. Oh well, I thought, I'll just have to replace those pieces. My attention turned to jacking up the car and getting the tires, which were indeed very flat, off. The first three wheels came off surprisingly easy. However, the fourth wheel was completely frozen and wouldn't budge for any amount of twisting or pulling. Not to be defeated so easily, I turned to the best secret weapon in my arsenal. After spraying about a half can of WD 40 in, on and around the wheel, I retired for the night.

The next morning found me banging the stuffing out of the reluctant wheel. After the liberal use of some more WD40 and brute force, the final wheel finally came loose. Relieved that this hurdle had been overcome, I loaded the four wheels along with the spare into my truck and drove over to the garage to get new tires put on them. Enter problem number two. When I reached the garage, which will remain nameless, the owner came out to see what sort of wheels I had. Upon inspection he said there would be no problem and that he had the correct tires inside. All he needed from me were the new tubes. After staring blankly at him for about thirty seconds, about all I could respond with was "What?" He informed me that the tubes would need to be replaced as well as the



tires or else they would never hold air. I responded that I realized that, but that I assumed he would have the tubes as he had told me over the phone that he could change the wheels with no problem and hadn't mentioned that I would need to supply the tubes. I'm still not sure how I didn't throttle him on the spot.

With no tubes, and no time to find some, the next resort was to just put air in the old tires and hope they would hold. With fingers, toes and anything else crossed, I stopped at a gas station and inflated the tires to the proper pressure. When there was no immediate sign of air leakage, I loaded everything up and headed back to my mom's house. I put the tires back on, said a quick prayer and lowered the car to the ground. With everything holding I let out a sigh of relief and smiled, figuring it was clear sailing from here on in.

At this point I went to pick up the truck and trailer so I could get the car loaded. Since this should have been pretty straight forward, I was feeling good about my chances of success. However, my run of bad luck hadn't quite run out. When I arrived at the truck rental site, the owner came out and talked to me since he had restored a few TR's in his time and was curious about the car. We talked for a few minutes while he completed the paperwork and then walked out to look

over the truck. Something kept bothering me as we gave the truck a once over, but I wasn't able to put my finger on it. Finally, I realized what was wrong - the trailer was a regular two rail instead of the flat bed I had requested. When I asked the owner about this, he said he hadn't been able to find a trailer of that type in the entire St.

Louis area. He assured me that he had moved Triumphs with this type of trailer and that they would fit just fine. After a few minutes of heated discussion about the concept and definition of reservation, I finally relented and said I would see what I could do with what he had.

Back at mom's house, I called up the friends who had agreed to help me muscle the car onto the trailer and at about 5:00 the night before I needed to start heading home, we walked down to the garage and took stock of the situation. The trailer had been maneuvered into position and the rails set up, the tires were holding air and we had to big strapping lads (and me) ready to get the sucker rolling. We got behind the car and eventually found good places to push from (anyone, who has ever had to push a GT6 will attest that not many of these places exist). One of counted to three, we pushed and...nothing. The car wouldn't budge an inch. I checked to make sure the car was in neutral and that the brake was off. Then, standing there bewildered it finally occurred to me what the problem was. ALL FOUR brakes had completely frozen up in a locked position. Even now I'm not sure what kind of obscenities came out of my mouth (I think I was speaking in tongues there for awhile). With only about an hour of daylight left and no way to extend my trip (my boss wouldn't have appreciated me telling him I'd be in when I was done playing with my car), I was looking at

the possibility that this trip was going to have been for nothing.

After a few minutes of deliberation, we decided the best course of action would be to just disconnect the brakes. Starting with the front disk brakes, we cut the lines and then removed the calipers from the disks. Of course, most of the bolts holding the calipers on were also frozen and required more of the magic WD40. After the front wheels were free and turning, we turned our attention to the rear drum brakes. Now any of you who have ever worked on these cars probably know about the two screws that you have to remove to get into the drums and how difficult they can be to remove. After all three of us tried everything we could to get these suckers out, we finally gave up. Either we were going to have to admit we had been defeated, or we were going to have to think of something else (in hindsight, we should have borrowed a drill as I later discovered that this was going to be the only way to get these screws out). The only thing we could think to do now was to attach chains between the truck and the car and try to pull it out of the garage with just the front wheels rolling. We quickly realized however, that this was going to severely damage the car. Looking around the garage, I began to devise an ambitious, Maguiver-like plan. Grapping a couple of old wooden waterbed support beams (my mom



never throws anything away), we leveraged the back end of the car up and then had the guy in the truck drag the car forward a few feet. You've never lived until you've tried to move a car this way at 11:00 at night down a curved driveway.

Once we got the car out of the garage and down the driveway to the trailer, we realized there

was going to be one final challenge. The ramps on the trailer, which I had been told would easily accommodate the GT, were set just slightly wider apart than the width of the car. As we started to pull the car up the ramps, the driver's side wheels were actually hanging off by about an inch. What this meant was that we would have to pull the car about six inches, stop the truck and then try and shove the car over a few inches so that the tires wouldn't slip off the ramp. As it was now about midnight, you can imagine how pleased my mom's neighbors were by all of this. Anyway, although it took another hour or so (we wrapped up at about 1:30), we did finally get the car onto the trailer. The only thing that had me worried was that the one side of the car was resting on the lip of the trailer. We lashed the car down as tightly as possible and hoped that it would hold.

The trip home, after everything I had gone through, was strangely uneventful. I would stop every 100 miles or so to check the car and make sure it hadn't shifted. Other than one exiting emergency stop outside of Nashville, I made it back to Atlanta unscathed. Unloading the car also proved to be fairly easy. It helped that my driveway slopes down so we were able to park the truck and basically just slide the car down the ramps with gravity doing most of the work. As for getting it into the garage, we discovered we could use refrigerator dollies to prop up the back tires and then push the car into its new home.

So, now my beautiful GT6 sits, partially disassembled in the back of my garage. I've since joined the Georgia Triumph Association ([www.gatriumph.com](http://www.gatriumph.com)) and have met several great guys. One of them Jeremy Whitehead (See Spitfire issue #3 for his article) has been incredible in offering his time to help start rebuilding (well, really tearing apart at this point) the GT. Hopefully, with Jeremy's help and a bunch of spare evenings and weekends, I can breath life back into this old girl. At this point, I'll have to be content to sit behind the wheel in the garage making vroom-vroom noises. But, give me some time, and if you're ever driving through Atlanta keep an eye out for a bright red GT6 going down the road with a driver sporting a huge ear to ear grin! I can't think of a better way to start off a new millennium. ■

# A Dream Come True (It's Deja Vu All Over Again)

BY KEITH & CARLA RICE, BURLINGTON NORTH CAROLINA



road about 25 miles away in Danville, VA. The dealer name was Wyatt Earpe Auto sales and yes, Wyatt Earpe was the owners real name. The year was 1977 and I remember going into that showroom and sitting in that British racing green Spitfire and Wyatt explaining how the gear ratio was close and how there was no need for power steering. He handed me the keys and we took off for a test drive. I will never forget...23 years ago...and yet it seemed only like yesterday. The familiar revving of the engine, up and down hills while the tach stayed at a steady 3500 rpm's at 65 mph, never slowing for curves as the steering was barely noticeable. My mom helped me sign the paperwork.

It was in December 2000 and I had awoken from another dream disappointed again. This was the same dream I have had many times before.

Let me explain. When I was 16 years old my first car was a Triumph. I live on a small farm in North Carolina and have worked on this farm since I was 6 years old. All the money I had earned, my mother had put into a bank savings account. Her reasoning was when I turned 16 I would have enough money to afford my own car. In a span of 10 years I had saved over \$5,000. On my 16th birthday I received my NCDL and my mother gave me permission to go buy my car. All the other kids in the area where into the usual domestics, but not me. I preferred the 2-seater British Roadsters, Triumph Spitfires preferably. I can still remember the TV commercials advertising the Spitfires beside the British Spitfire fighter plane. Both would start, rev their engines, and take off down the runway. And as fate would have it, there was a local British Leyland dealer just down the

As the years went by, my domestication set in. Marriage, a home, and worst of all, economizing. The Triumph was traded, the family sedan acquired. Only one small problem. The dream, the same dream for the next 20 years kept telling me what I should have known all along. In the dream, I would always go out to the barn with the big double doors, open them up, pull off the canvas sheet and step inside my Triumph Spitfire and crank up and rev the engine and take off. Then I would awaken.

Now back to present time. It's two weeks before Christmas and I've just had that old famil-



iar dream. I've never told anyone about it but decide it's time I did. I'm currently married to my 2nd wife Carla and it's been 9 wonderful years. I'm going to describe the dream to her the next day...but...she comes to me first all excited about a wonderful experience she's had. It seems a friend of hers has just had her first car restored from many years ago, an old MG. She had let Carla take a drive in it and even drive it. The Carla told me of her passion for the 2-seater roadsters and how she's always wanted one. Well I told her of my recurring dream. She told me it was time to stop dreaming and go find that car. I needed no further encouragement.

I knew it would be a tough search, and I would be extremely lucky to find a Spitfire in my own state. I bought a local auto trader and searched the paper up and down. I was about to give up hope when I glanced over the misc. column and then did a double take. I couldn't believe my eyes, A Triumph Spitfire in excellent mechanical condition, a 79 for sale only about 20 miles from my home. It wasn't my old car but it was destiny. I called to inquire and a very charming lady, Mrs. Allison was her name, told me to stop by and see the car. I was there promptly the next day. The car had been garaged and the engine and transmission had been completely rebuilt by a local mechanic who also owned a Spitfire. The only problem was the brake lights would sometimes not light up, but if you have ever owned a Spitfire you should know, that a fingernail file for cleaning the terminals and a small aerosol can of electrical spraywash is all you need. After using those, the brake lights worked perfectly. The car had only 64k miles. I negotiated the price with Mrs. Allison and the rest is history, (or destiny that is). Even the convertible top with the zipper rear window is in excellent condition.

For myself and my wife Carla it is a dream come true. Revving that familiar engine, taking curves without braking, and the wind in our face there is no other feeling like it.

Now, just to have that dream again. I'll awake, go out to the old barn, pull back the canvas sheet, climb into the cockpit and start the engine...Like Yogi Berra once said, "It's Deja Vu All Over Again!"

The photos are of Carla On December 27 outside riding with the top down, looking forward to summer! ■



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# Twenty Years with My Spitfire!

BY MIKE A. JAPP, PENSACOLA FLORIDA



Others may have had their Spitfires longer than me, but it's hard to believe that twenty years have gone by since my Dad bought me this 1977 Triumph Spitfire from the original owner. Even though I have had to repair many things and broke down unexpectedly once or twice, I have still thoroughly enjoyed my twenty years with this Spitfire. Who else can say they still have their first car, twenty years later?

It started in 1981 when my Dad brought me to a man's house in Bay St. Louis, Mississippi and showed me this yellow sports car convertible. I was 15-years-old and a month from my birthday. Dad asked me if I liked the car and if so he would buy it and we would fix it up. After climbing in and imagining driving it, "Sure!", I said and I'm glad I did.

The original owner had ran it hard and cracked the block. So Dad located a wrecked Spitfire to get an engine from. With the help of my cousin, Bob, we replaced the engine under a raised house on the coast of Waveland, MS, that we had finished building shortly before. I dented the front bumper slightly before even driving it by backing a pickup with the replacement engine a little too close to the car! The bonnet was removed and the tailgate of the truck put a small dent in the bumper.

After finishing engine replacement and getting the Stromberg carburetor rebuilt, Dad taught me how to drive a standard-shift. I would later take small trips around the neighborhood to practice the shifting technique. Naturally I stalled it in first gear a few times or forgot to put it back in

first after a stop. Don't we all when we first learn?

For the next six years I drove the car all over to high school and college, to Mississippi beaches on weekends and even delivered pizzas part-time. During high school a friend and I drove it from my hometown of Slidell, LA to Cape Canaveral, FL to watch the second space shuttle launch. On that trip the water pump blew there and had to be replaced before we could drive back. I had not learned much as yet about repairing the car, so we paid a mechanic for the job that I later learned how to do myself. Later on I did replace the rear leaf spring myself when it lost tension and also later the differential. Those jobs each took me a week.

It was impressed upon me forever to never, ever sell the Spitfire when I was 20-years old and working part-time at a gas station. During a year's time, about 20 different men in their 40's, 50's, and 60's would notice my Spitfire on the side of the building and ask about it. They would say that they had one when there were my age or that they had a Austin Healey, or an MGB, or TR6 or etc. But they always ended their story with this: "... but I sold it when I was in my 20's and I have regretted it ever since". If it had been only one or two men that said this to me, no big deal. But it was about 20 different men told me that they had "regretted it ever since". I did not want that regret so I vowed to always keep my Spitfire no matter what.

In 1987 I decided to join the US Navy and stored my Spitfire in Mom's garage for a year during boot camp and training school. When permanently stationed in Jacksonville, FL, I used the Toyota Corolla sport coupe I had bought to tow the Spitfire 500 miles to Jacksonville and used a 24-hour storage unit as my garage because I was living in the barracks, so no garage.

On weekends that my squadron was not working, I would repair, improve, and drive the car around Jacksonville. One side of the front

hubs began squeaking badly, so I ordered new inner and outer wheel bearings and replaced them on both sides following the instructions in the Haynes manual. After new spark plugs and a carb rebuild, my barracks roommate used to love the time that I let him drive the flashy yellow convertible and he said it was a blast.

The next year I moved into sharing a house with two other Navy guys and they let me use the garage for my Spitfire. It was there that I decided to replace the carpet. As we know, Spitfires are never completely waterproof with the top up. Mine is no exception. When I removed the seats and pulled up the carpet, I discovered the floor pans were quite rusted on the surface. So I proceeded to sand down all the rust and old paint, vacuum thoroughly, spray it with rust-prevention treatment and then seal it with undercoating compound. I did that last step because I knew that water would once again find its way into the car again, so I wanted to protect the metal from further damage. Then the new carpet went in.

The day before I started my Christmas leave in 1989, the carb of my Toyota broke and I could not fix it in time to travel to Mom's house, so I decided to drive the Spitfire. It was a nice drive there for Christmas, but it didn't make it back. About an hour into the return trip, the engine started banging loudly, so I pulled over and opened hood to check for damage. I saw no obvious external damage so I had to call for a flat-bed tow truck to take me back to Mom's house from Gulfport, MS, which was expensive. I was forced to return to Jacksonville with out my Spitfire! Fortunately, my sister was returning to Orlando, so she brought me back to Jacksonville first.

My Spitfire sat in Mom's garage for a year until I finished my tour and switched to the Naval Reserves. That was when my friend Tom and I were finally able to pull the engine and remove the oil pan. We discovered that one of the piston connecting rod bearings was damaged from that night after Christmas. Since I had no knowledge of internal engine repair and no special tools to do the job, we brought the engine to a professional in New Orleans who only charged me \$150 in

labor cost in addition to the parts and machine shop cost, all total \$930. After installing the engine back in the car, I was back in the Spitfire's saddle with a rebuilt engine.

I moved to Pensacola, FL for my second college experience and had to leave my Spitfire again in Mom's garage for a few years while I attended classes and worked part-time three weekends a month and Navy Reserve the fourth weekend a month. As a financially-struggling university student, I had no money and no time for the Spitfire. I needed reliable everyday transportation so my Toyota Corolla served me there, but I never gave up on my Spitfire!

After I graduated from the university and rented a house with a carport, my friend Tom used his Buick to tow my Spitfire to Pensacola. There I used heavy tarps on the side and front to protect the Spitfire from bad weather. I worked to recover it from the time in storage by first rebuilding the front and rear brakes, then the fuel pump, and worked on the electronics. I worked it into as reliable a car as a Spitfire could be. I drove it on a long trip from Pensacola to Seagrove, FL (2-hours each way) and back with no trouble. Then I joined a local club, the Panhandle British Car Association, and had fun going to shows and learning from the experienced guys.

But going to shows made me realize that my car was due for bodywork and paint. I also realized that I was tired of renting, so I looked for a house to buy with the Spitfire in mind and found a place that had a large shop behind the house. After moving in, I took the Spitfire apart. I removed the engine, transmission, bumpers, tail lights, turn signals, door handles, and all devices from the engine compartment firewall. I also removed the interior and then rolled the body onto a trailer to take it to the body shop.

I admire you guys who do your own bodywork, but because of my affection for this car I did not want to learn how to do bodywork on this car and not have a professional-looking good job. Also the original owner had an accident which was repaired with a lot of bondo on the right rear quarter panel. I decided that since this was a

restoration job that the quarter panel needed to be replaced and I did not have the welding equipment or knowledge to use it.

While I waited for the car to be finished, I noticed that many car clubs had websites and I asked if our club had one. The answer was that probably nobody in the club knew how to make one. So I volunteered my services and designed a site, presented it to the club, was voted the official webmaster for the club, and continue to improve and update the site for the club. I also have a personal Spitfire site with pictures of my car's restoration along the way. When I brought the finished body back from the shop, it was only two weeks before my club's annual show on Pensacola Beach. So I worked every night before the show to put it back together. I had the engine back in but not running yet and I also had trouble with re-connecting all the other wiring correctly. So I trailered it to the show and received 2nd place in the Restoration class.

Some time after the show when I finished



the wiring enough to try to drive it, I discovered that the clutch would not stop the flywheel to shift into gear. There was plenty of fluid and the clutch line was completely bled. With the transmission tunnel cover off, I could see the lever that the slave cylinder pushes through a small space between the clutch slave cylinder and the bellhousing. When I pressed the clutch, I could see it move forward. But apparently it did not move forward enough to stop the flywheel. So after fiddling with it for two weeks, I decided to learn something and go to the mechanic. Bob Malcomson at Tartan's Garage in Pensacola discovered that it was the pivot pin sleeve that had worn down. When I would press the clutch and the push rod pressed one side of the bellhousing lever, the worn sleeve allowed the other side to fall back just enough to not give the clutch enough contact with the flywheel. It was an expensive lesson, but now I have learned something!

One thing I would advise all Spitfire owners to do is to rewire the hot source for the brake lights so that they work even when the ignition is not on. If your car quits while driving due to ignition, then the brake lights also will not work and the person behind you will not know that you are hitting the brakes to pull over and.... don't want to think about it! I rewired mine directly to the battery with a fuse for protection. Modern cars have this feature, so Spitfires should also!

Lastly, let me put a plug in for my club's annual show, the Pensacola British Car Beach Bash on Pensacola Beach in April each year. We have a blast showing off our 90+ British cars and turning heads of the beach goers. People come to our show from all over the southeast and have a great time. Please visit our website for more details at <http://www.geocities.com/pbca1> and view pictures of previous shows plus pictures of every car at last year's 2000 show. Spitfire pictures are on the first row, of course! Detailed show information, directions and a map, and a registration form are also on the website or call Tom Schmitz at (334)961-7171.

Happy motoring and stay safe! ■

# 23 Years of Love and Autocross

BY W.C. WIESE, MAITLAND FLORIDA

Blame it on my 1956 Austin Healey 100-4.

I had loved my red two-seat convertible while in college, blasting it home everyday from campus on football-crisp fall days. Having an old British sports car was a truly special joy. It connected me with a privileged driving tradition and provided a direct feed of pure driving satisfaction.

But then I sold it. Nothing short of a Mercury Monterrey would relocate my collected worldly possessions to Michigan and my new job.

Several years piloting this 390-cubic-inch V-8 behemoth (and a trunk that could swallow a touring bicycle whole with room for most of Rhode Island) did not quench my need to reconnect to the driving mystique of the British Isles. In my mind's eye, I saw tapered flanks, rear fenders crafted into crouched feline haunches, and a bulged hood covering a small iron block that red-lined at modest rpm. I dreamed that I again sat only inches off the ground and peered through a narrow gun-slit of glass with my legs almost fully extended in front of me. Alone, or perhaps with a single chosen companion, I rowed the four gears to push the blended light from two round headlamps down a myriad of deserted two-lane state highways.

The dream persisted. Soon, I began searching for the second chapter in my love affair with English sports cars.



Co-workers had heard me carry on about how I'd buy another English sports car if I could find one at the right price. So, when one of them asked me whether I'd heard about the GT6 that Johnny in the art department was selling, my response was quick. "No! How much does he want for it?" I asked, knowing the limits of my capital. He told me it was selling for \$200. I figured immediately that this car had been rolled and burned.

But it hadn't.

In fact, the dark blue GT6 Mark I was surprisingly intact, including an inspired rose and lime green Taj Mahal image sprayed through lace on the hood's long nose blister. KC11805's only flaw was to arouse a parent's ire as his teenage son once again reported the latest in a series of clutch malfunctions. With no more heart for the game, Johnny declared that the car had to go. The son was now an ally. He was born to drive, not to

**Monthly autocrosses in Orlando have kept the Mark I going. No longer fast enough to win, it's always ready to compete.**



Daughter Aimee still fits inside the car, but son Chris has grown too tall to share the enjoyment of driving it. Five-foot-nine is a practical limit.

wait on more repairs. Nor to argue with his father over the cost. My purchase put their turmoil to rest.

## DESTINY - AND A COURSE IN AUTO MECHANICS

The problems related to a mismatch between a Borg and Beck clutch disk and a Laycock pressure plate, and through dumb luck in replacing everything, the clutch malady simply disappeared forever. But there was another problem that grew from the car's months of waiting to be sold. The engine had seized.

Again, the destiny that brought me together with the car acted to solve the engine problem as well. Attached by a tow rope to an friend's station wagon, I was steering down Fairbanks Avenue from Brewer's Curve when a Spitfire friend pulled alongside to ask if my new acquisition had come from another friend of his. It hadn't. So the next day, I found myself negotiating with another teenager whose 1969 GT6 Plus fell into my possession on the following weekend for \$100. The tranny was broken, but the engine was strong. Another father and son had been reunited through the simple act of removing an unrepaired Triumph that stood between them.

Another friend, just out of college and newly married, offered to perform the engine transplant for \$200 and the promise of no time pressure.

There was no disagreement from me. And he worked with amazing swiftness! I savored my first drive very soon, using a toolbox for a driver's seat and with no transmission tunnel cover to muffle the gear noise as we drove down a residential street at dusk. It was 1977, and I was at last reconnected to the sensations I remembered from my fondly remembered Healey days.

My father, an accountant, really hadn't been mechanically inclined, so he could only impart a farm boy's knowledge of how to care for an automobile. I was on my own if I expected to keep my new acquisition going. Worse, the Triumph arm of British Leyland was failing in the late 1970s, so dealer support was disappearing fast. If I was going to continue to drive and improve the car, I was going to have to learn to do much of it myself. Armed with a Floyd Clymer manual, I set about basic maintenance tasks and periodic repairs that included head gasket and swing axle replacements, differential swaps, valve adjustments, and the dreaded carburetor synchronizations. I've always been thankful that the car is small and accessible, including the wide opening clamshell hood that puts most of the engine in easy reach. Then, as long as the repairs involved reading my book and replacing some parts, usually the right things have happened.

So, for some 20 years after I bought the car, I had the awkward pleasure of telling Johnny that I'd driven the GT6 to work that day, including on the day he retired. There was no actual desire to tease or embarrass him. Instead, it was more of a faithful reporting of innocent amazement that the car he'd excommunicated had gone another 70,000 miles and was present in the parking lot yet again, not more than 250 feet away. Johnny's son, now in his 40s, never saw the car again, but he surely must have heard of its survival from his dad.

For almost 23 years, the little blue GT6 has done battle in monthly local autocrosses. At first, it was exciting to have a car with the torque of an inline six and the ability to pull 60 mph in second gear. On the other hand, driving for speed on maneuverability courses is needlessly difficult when each swing axle permits a full 14 degrees

of camber change. Once safely managed by a restraining strap, competition sway bars, and race-compound tires, the car became a joy to drive aggressively. It doesn't win very often (its driver blames the upward creep of horsepower in today's imports) as the classing system acknowledges and incorporates like the new imports with multilink suspensions. Then again, will anyone else race those cars 30 years from now? Credit the GT6's longevity and vitality to the monthly stress test of autocross and the need to soon be ready for another event.

## THE GOLD MINE

About 15 years later, destiny again intervened to ensure my ability to preserve the Mark I. In the same company lunchroom where I'd first learned about the car, a fellow employee sought me out and sat down. There was a strong feeling of *deja vu*. Like before, another employee/father had come to ask whether I was interested in buying a GT6.

He explained that his son had been driving the car home to Florida from college in New York when it developed an engine knock. Unable to diagnose it in time to return to school, the son bought a Saab 900. Now the father had had his fill of backing the family Volvo around the Triumph every morning. "He'll be home this weekend," the father said. "Why don't you come over and make him an offer?"

A 1971 Mark III sat in the suburban driveway when I sought out the young man. He told the story that led him to park it, acknowledged that he'd started a master's degree program in California, and clearly realized his chance to resolve the discarded car issue with his father rested with me. There was plenty of rust, but an unusual appeal in the plum-colored car. We agreed on \$300, and then he said, "and you can have what's in the garage, too."

Where had he gotten this stuff? Three radiators, a cylinder head, cross-drilled brake rotors, extra calipers, replacement rocker panels, and four carbs. Two differentials! An overdrive shifter and switch. A full wire wheel and hub set. Unwittingly, I'd stumbled on into a parts resource

that would serve for years to come.

Ultimately, I sold the Mark III to a restorer for over \$1000 and got to keep the parts find. The real shame? The college student had parked the car when the drive pulley on the crankshaft developed some free play, causing the knock after sharp acceleration and deceleration. What appeared to be a costly impending engine overhaul was solved by torquing the crankshaft nut...

## MAKING MEMORIES

Just last year, my 15-year-old son began to declare his readiness for the initial rites of manhood. Naturally, driving was first on the list of stubborn demands. Eager to prove that driving was infinitely more complicated than any video game he'd already mastered, my crafty parental wiles advised me to let the boy drive the little blue hatchback in a deserted parking lot. Equally ready to respond, the impudent son failed to stall the car and embarrass himself as I'd predicted. We laughed as we shared his first drive and first successful gearshift. As fate had been kind in preserving the car for me, it also endeared the car to my son as the little car that wouldn't jeopardize a young man's fragile ego. I'm happy to report that he now hates to drive anything with an automatic transmission. Sadly though, at six-foot-one, he's already too tall to fit comfortably into the Triumph. Hope remains for our daughter, who may choose to quit at five-foot-eight and who has always enjoyed showing up her brother.

Just last fall, I enjoyed a 150-mile night drive home from a Triumph show in Florida in the 33-year-old GT6. The 2-1/2-hour trip gave ample time to grasp all of the sounds of the car without distraction. The soft exhaust burble during acceleration, the clack of the engine's generously adjusted tappets, the resonance of the body noises, and the occasional metallic clinking of the jack, spare, and tire iron below the hatch floor. It's absolutely symphonic! Every trip is amazing as I consider the "heart" of this durable small car and its enduring desire to please.

Far and away, the little Triumph is the best \$200 car I've ever owned.

Thanks again, Johnny! ■

# Living in the Fast Lane (...right!)

BY LAURA GHARAZEDDINE, SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Yesterday, I was at a little British car show-playing proud mama to my "little one"-a 1978 Triumph Spitfire 1500 named "Nigel" (They all have names, don't they?;-) On the little sign they give you to write what year, make and model car, I wrote in big letters "DAILY DRIVER". Those two words garner as much attention as the beautiful paint, the Weber and the oil cooler combined!

"You drive it every day?" (Yes, every day.)

"What about when it rains?" (If you don't stop, you don't get wet!)

"It must always be garaged,



The photo was taken in the Santa Monica Mountains-behind me is Calabasas and West San Fernando Valley/Thousand Oaks area.

right?" (No, I have a car port and a car cover.)

Yes, I drive it everyday.

Even when it rains. I'm sort of 'semi-retired' now, so it's not like I have a daily commute of

50 miles each way. And I do have the option of staying home in bad weather. But still, it is my one and only transportation (and if you live in Orange County, California, you know how too true that is! Our bus system here is a joke!)

I drive about 12k miles a year. 99 % of it with the top down. (Friends have learned not to even suggest putting the top up.) Much of that is on our L.A. freeways-nose to tail pipe with the trucks, SUVs and commercial trucks none of whom have the same stringent exhaust limits that cars have. Life on the L.A. freeways and streets is a very interesting one-if odiferous at times.

Life in the fast lane is an adventure-people stare; some wave and call out "Nice car!" at 85 mph. I

have found that the nicest drivers to one as small as "Nigel" are the big rigs-they really seem to look out for us-let us through the traffic when we're signaling to change lanes. Some feel compelled to cut in front of us-I guess they figure it's safer to cut a teeny car off than to try that sort of boorish behavior on a Ranger Rover. Rice Boys also tend to be a bit rude-maybe it's because my itty bitty car is as loud as theirs? I don't know. But, for the most part, when you drive a little car like the Spitfire, people aren't so bad. And it brings a smile to their faces. (Funny story-I met someone on a blind date, who lives and works about 40 miles from where I live. But, when he saw the car, his mouth fell open-he had seen me on the 405 freeway several times-and really admired the car!)

City driving is a nerve-wracking event though. I think people are much less careful when they're just driving around town than they are at 85mph on the I-405! I don't know if it's the slower speed or the casual feel of tootling around, running errands, getting gas, picking up the kids-but I would rather drive my little Spitfire on the freeway than in town. People darting in and out, pedestrians jaywalking, kids on bikes-all threats to Nigel's lovely body! Life with a Spitfire has made me a much more alert and defensive driver, to say the least!

But driving in the morning rush hour traffic in downtown LA.-the looks and waves make it all worth it! (Has no one in the L.A. Civic Center never seen a Spitfire before? ;-) He brings perma-grin to people. I can imagine when they're getting into their offices and everyone is getting their morning coffee and having that chit chat-"Bob, you'll never believe what I saw this morning-a really beautiful Triumph!" "Gee Dave, I thought they stopped making those years ago!"...

Sometimes, I'll even be in the next lane over

from some guy in an old LBC-and we'll chat at each stop light about caring for the little beasts before driving our separate ways. Older couples in their MGs, dreaming of re-living their youth through the restoring and driving of the little car. Or young kids dreaming of the "Good Old Days" they heard they dad's and uncles talk about-trying to recapture that with their Spitfire. And all the women I meet who'll smile and walk up and say-"I had a Spitfire for years. Loved that car..." leaving the rest unsaid, dreaming... (Seems that a lot of women owned and drove Spitfires when they were new. And I've met more women who knew that it's a Triumph Spitfire and not an MG or a Fiat!)

Of course, the best is what I think of as "holiday driving"-that is, just going for a ride just for the sake of going for a ride. Beautiful day, nothing to do but drive down PCH in a shiny, lovely Spitfire-Jimi Hendrix blaring, ahhhh...up into one of the canyons. Sometimes, even though I drive it everyday, it might be weeks and weeks before I get a chance to have just a nice, relaxing, fun drive to nowhere and back. I have to remind myself that there are people who really only drive their Spits under those circumstances! (Wow!) And even though when I hear about it, I sometimes feel a little pang of something akin to jealousy ("must be nice to just go for a drive!") I then remember that I get that wonderful feeling every time I run what might be an ordinary, mundane errand of going to the P.O. or running to the store for a loaf of bread. Even in winter, when all over the rest of the country, little Spitfires are in their warm, cozy dens, hibernating until Spring!

Think of all that you experience and feel on those occasions when the Spitty gets pulled out of the garage and is released-and multiply it by 7 and multiply that by 365-and that's what it's like to have a Spitfire as a daily driver!

(Special acknowledgments to Dave Kois at European Collectibles and Bob Muzio of TRSC and Maurizio Nascimben-my "Pit Crew"! ;-)  
■



## For Nigel

*(Works in Progress...)*

*The long and sweeping line  
that gives to erotic fantasies.  
Like the sensual curve of a back,  
a neck,  
a tongue.*

*The rumble that comes from deep  
inside until it bursts out-  
Loud and clear!  
delighting,  
embracing,  
racing-*

*As the hearts of lovers race  
to one another to intertwine  
and enchant one another  
on a wild ride  
wind in the hair  
sun on the skin.*

*I slide inside, my body  
fitting perfectly in his.  
I turn the key,  
the motor spins  
and catches-  
He roars to life!  
My heart beats faster.  
Rhythmically we work  
together-*

# My Classic Triumph Story

BY VITO FINAZZO, ARLINGTON TEXAS

Last winter, I decided that it was time for me to buy a little sportscar (I guess it's some kind of middle age crazy thing?). My painting worktruck (my only vehicle at that time) was just about paid off and I was interested in finding a little 2 seater like a Honda Del Sol or a Toyota MR2 to take out on dates, etc. I looked at a couple of both models and found that even used ones were fairly expensive.

One day right before Christmas, I passed a house where a little, bright yellow car was sitting with a huge red bow on its hood and a for sale sign on its windshield. I turned around and got out to get a closer look. It was a convertible but had a hardtop fitted on it. I couldn't recognize what kind of car it was since there were no markings on it. I finally spotted the Triumph name on the center of each hub. A woman came out of the house and I asked what exactly was this vehicle. I was told that it was a 1975 Triumph Spitfire and asked if I would like to take it for a spin. I jumped on the chance. I got in and revved it up. The "purr" was exciting...it had a pair of Monza pipes on it. I drove it around the area for about 10 minutes, came back and asked how much she was asking for it. I expected a price of \$10K or more. She said \$3500. I said that this was very tempting but that I would have to think about it.

I drove past it the following 2 days and finally I stopped and told the woman that I wanted it. That is when I found out that her husband was an importer of classic cars (including a Birkin/Caterham dealer). I met Dick Birkin and he gave me lots of useful history/info on Triumphs in general and a lot of specifics on this

particular one. He had owned it twice over the last 10 years. He acquired this one in a package deal. But he assured me that it was a very well maintained vehicle. I fell in love with it! Dick referred his mechanic to me and his man did the repairs necessary to get the vehicle inspected. That mechanic referred me to a mechanic here in Arlington, Texas at Sportscar Warehouse, named Byron Carlson. He specializes in British cars. I have since established a very good rapport with him and have paid him about \$1000 to get it in top working condition.

One day while I was picking up the Spitfire, I saw this beautiful, sexy, hot, red fastback in his showroom. I looked it over and asked what it was. It was a 1970 GT6+. It was for sale. Byron assured me that this was a very well maintained classic and pretty rare and that he knew the previous owner for about 10 years and was able to tell me all about the restoration. I went home, got a paid in full credit card with a 5.9% interest rate until paid off and went back and bought it on the card for \$4800. My truck was paid off so I justified replacing that payment for the payment on this GT6+. I was in heaven! The love affair between the two vehicles and myself was a fantasy come true...a menage a trois!

I paid less for these two classics than I would have for one Honda or Toyota. And these qualify for classic auto insurance. I have never received so much fun, joy, or satisfaction from any other car I have owned before. Yes, a little timely and costly to maintain but once they're tuned and purring, it is well worth the expense and time. I joined the British Owners Group (BOG) here in Arlington and have went on road rallies, shows, meets, etc. I have met a bunch of really fun people and have been exposed to a whole new world of classic automobile history.

I have had offers on both cars but I will not let either them go. To own one of both of these classic Triumphs is my dream come true! ■

**May 19-27**  
**"Drive Your British Car Week",**  
**Get your British cars out on the roads**  
**during this week!**

visit <http://members.aol.com/Trmgafun/britishcarweek.html> for details

# Triumphulosis: The Spitfire Kind

BY R.J. DAILEY, HELENA, MONTANA

I have spent a lot of time trying to understand just what it is about my '76 Spitfire that transforms me and others like me from rational men into madmen who spend enormous amounts of time and money on a car, just a car, simply trying to keep it rolling under its own power. Sure the car handles well, but it is not very fast. Yeah it is easy to work on but it is not very reliable. Okay the parts are pretty cheap and available, but it always needs something replaced. And of course it is fun to drive around town, but any trip outside of town is half fun, half trepidation. So what is it? Why does this car turn otherwise intelligent people into monomaniacal lunatics?

I contacted Triumphulosis about eight years ago, a day a co-worker drove his '75 Spitfire to work. He never had before because, surprise, it had been in pieces for years before that, and when he finally got it all together he vowed to sell it. One look and I was interested. We spent our lunch hour driving it around and I was infected. But the money he had put into it just getting it running again put it out of my price range and into my dreams. I was heartbroken, already a goner.

He quit that job soonafter, but two years later I saw him again. He still had the car—he was infected too, of course, and Triumphulosis is incurable (remission is possible with treatment, but reoccurrence is common, especially in aging men). He had even bought another one as a parts car. The first thing we talked about was the car. He remembered my lust and, perhaps he felt indirectly responsible for my illness, offered to sell me the parts car for \$300. It starts, he said, but doesn't stay running. That was all I had to hear and the next day I was screaming down the highway in this little yellow Spitfire...being pulled on the most terrifying drive of my life by a Nissan pickup (I strongly recommend against the "self-tow" down the Interstate, especially if the person



towing is nuts and thinks 75 is a comfortable speed even while towing a very small car with bald to flat tires).

But it was mine, all mine, and it didn't even take much tinkering to get it to run. After taking the carburetor apart and putting it back together, I was out driving in a couple of days. But that's, as you know, dear reader, was only the beginning. Since then the car has almost constantly been in some state of maintenance or repair need. All of the classic problems that everyone says happen to Triumphs has happened to mine. Before I bought the car, someone who knew, the venerable old men who know these things, they told me. Oh they warned me. It is not that I was not listening or did not understand; it is that I had no choice. I am a sick man.

There is no doubt that Triumphulosis causes delusions. It makes us unable to see the irrationality of owning this car. If the classic risk-reward/cost-benefit assessment is applied to ownership of a Triumph, the results are obvious to everyone but an owner — they are more trouble than they are worth. Ah, to be among the uninfected! To an owner, however, reason does not apply. To us, there is no replacement for the feel-



**Small \$'s, big fun! And after all, isn't that what it is all about? R.J. with friend and his '81 Fiat Spider.**

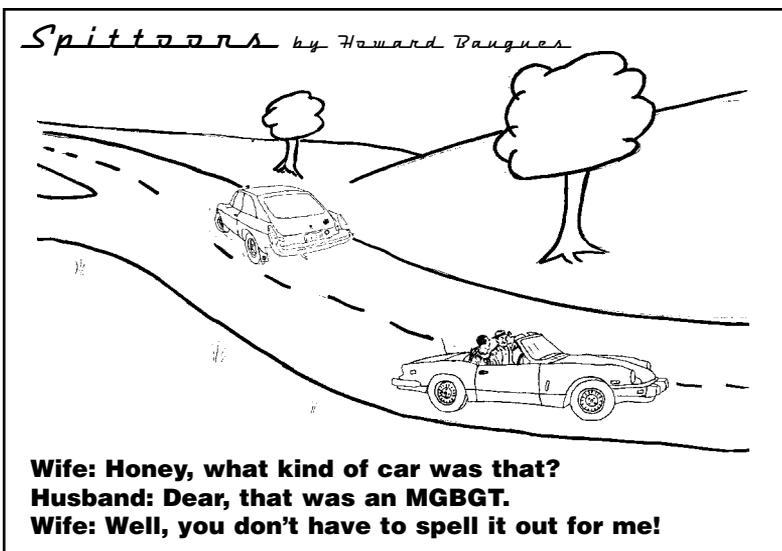
ing of lowering yourself into that tiny seat (door use optional), starting that tragically small engine, and rumbling off down a winding highway with the wind in your face and the smell of burning oil in your nostrils (all the while mentally calculating the probability that you will be taking a long walk in minutes).

Now, granted, my case of Triumphulosis is not the worst I have ever witnessed. Indeed I have seen things in my travels that would, and sometimes do, make those who are not afflicted stare and sigh in disbelief. The amount of money I have spent on one restoration Spitfire could have easily paid off at least two brand new aver-

age-priced cars. I have seen and read of insane cases of engine swapping and mutations, at costs too astronomical to fathom. And I, even I, have spent an unhealthy percentage of my budget and countless hours, alone in my garage reading a shop manual, putting the puzzle pieces of my car together because all I got when I telephoned various mechanics in town were comments such as, "We can try, but no promises or guarantees on those" and, more commonly, only the ghosts of distant, sibilant laughter.

So to you, reader, I say that I understand. If you are reading this magazine it is probably too late for you. You are infected, but you are not alone. There are many of us. In fact, I have found that in practically every town, if you look, you will find us. And, as I have found many times, once you are invited into the underworld of the Triumph obsessed, you will find only friendly, sympathetic and helpful people. It may be that these people are just symptomatic of Triumphulosis, or it may be that only these kinds of people can be so devoted to this car, oh this mystical and infectious car.

I have sent the only pictures I have of my car. My car is still the primer-yellow camouflage; it has been since I bought it. Keeping it running takes most of my budget for the car so cosmetic improvements have always stayed out of reach. She's ugly...but I love her just the same. ■



# Remembering My British Cars

BY TOM & NANCY BENNETT, SARASOTA, FL

It began in 1965: A '59 Anglia with a very good body but the front crankshaft seal left me hitch-hiking in Williston, FL. Later a Greyhound bus brought me back to the Anglia and with a couple of gallons of oil I made it back to Miami. The entire front of the Anglia appeared as if it was crying oil.

Later in 1965: I switched to a '59 Morris Minor Convertible which badly needed head/valve/carb help after torquing the last nut about 11 p.m., I left the 72 degree Miami weather northbound. Within 6 hours there was sleet and rain. This Minor was a Florida car with no heater. However, the boot over the shifter was gone and the engine heat was very welcomed as I arrived at my parents home 19 hours later (the temp was also 19°).

My next several cars did not include any British (or European or Japanese) cars. It wasn't until I continually passed a GT6 neglected in the edge of a farm. For 5 or so years it was in a shed, which eventually collapsed and the poor thing was left open to the elements. I stopped one day to ask about it and found that the owner was in the military, had problems with the car and wouldn't mind selling it. After settling for something near \$100, I had a GT6 with the engine sitting sideways under the bonnet, 2nd and 3rd gears were blown and the rear center section was also blown. The interior was what you could expect from several years of neglect.

During the next two years, I alternately cussed the British engineers which designed this car and the attorneys for my former wife. I worked on the car until I got mad, then went to the attorneys to get even more irritated. Does that count as therapy? After 2 years of rebuilding, the GT6 served well as a fun car until it got bumped off the road too many times by 'red-necks' driving big wheeled pick-up trucks who would say, "I didn't see you down there."

Therefore I moved to a larger British Auto the XJS. As a single gentleman, again, I got the vanity license plate "2NICE41". Many fun filled evenings and weekends followed including trophies from rallies with Jaguar Club of Florida and Orlando Sports Car Club. After "retiring" at 44, I moved onto a 35' sailboat, began extensive cruis-



ing and regretfully the XJS would be sold.

Again, I was without a British car for several years, though always wishing for another fun car. My wife Nancy and I came close with a laser red Mustang GT convertible. Now, for a luxury grand touring, we have a Vanden Plas with the same license plate "2NICE41" and most recently for fun, Nancy and I have an almost restored BRG '76 Triumph Spitfire 1500 with our newest vanity license plate "NICE42"

For over two years we watched this car sitting in the driveway 5 blocks away, occasionally driven and occasionally sitting on jacks. Talked with the owner about it and what he was doing with it. Then the Suncoast British Car Club had a 50 mile Sunday drive to a nice restaurant. We were in our Vanden Plas, others had the tops down, wind in their hair and the "brrum, brrum" sounds. On the way home Nancy and I both agreed we should have a FUN car. (She previously had 3 Corvair Spyders, 3 Fiat Spiders and therefore has a passion for fun driving). We put a note on the windshield of the Spitfire "if your car is for sale call..." Almost 2 months later the call came, I was over there in 10 minutes with a paper that I offer a deposit subject to taking it to a mechanic for a checkout. Two minutes after the checkout, I called the owner to report "all is OK"...I was there 10 minutes later to close the purchase.

Our Spitfire is specifically "NICE42"! ■

# If Only I Could Turn Back the Clock to the Day I Had A GT6!

BY STEWART MOSS, OXFORDSHIRE. ENGLAND

I'm 29 this month. To date I've owned about 35 cars, many of them Triumphs. Some wonderful, others less fondly remembered. Of the 35 or so automobiles, there is only one that I regret selling, to this very day; my 1972, red GT6 MKIII. This is a sad tale...

It all began in 1990, when I was a fresh faced 18 year old country lad, who had just passed his driving test and owned a humble, tatty Mini. I am working in the big city (Oxford), having recently started my first full time job, in an office, as a trainee. I knew little about cars.

One of the experienced twenty-something underwriter's, Paul (who is infinitely cooler than me), was telling me a story of how he'd recently been stopped by the Police whilst driving his weekend car, which he explained was a GT6. I nodded appreciatively, though in reality I hadn't a clue what a GT6 was or even what it looked like! He told me how the Police Officer had allegedly licked his lips at the prospect of "doing" Paul for stealing the car, and announced to Paul that during his career he'd "eaten for breakfast" countless youths for stealing cars like Paul's GT6. The very punchline was that the copper's mouth had dropped when Paul explained that the loud, curvy classic sportscar belonged to him!

Anyway, that night I asked my dad (who'd owned a TR6 in his youth), was a GT6 was like.

He explained that it was like  
a Spitfire,  
but

with a 2 litre 6 cylinder engine & a roof, it was fast, curvy and highly desirable. "Don't see many of 'em nowadays" he commented.

Approximately 2 years on, after hopelessly getting into Triumphs via a Dolomite Sprint & then a TR7, I one day came across an advert for a cheap GT6 (£1500) in my dad's autotrader. It looked & sounded great in the advert, and was only in Oxford. Looking more carefully through the magazine, I came across another slightly more expensive, just outside of Oxford, at £1800. I was inspired, and feeling spontaneous, arranged to view both cars the next day during my lunchtime, despite the fact that I couldn't really afford it. I advertised my boring MG Montego straight away.

The first, cheaper car, was a late M-reg non-rotoflex belonging to a slightly oddball chap working at a backstreet theatre. Within seconds I saw it was not the car for me. The car looked very forlorn, with large areas of the faded carmine paint bubbling & peeling. Most of the headlining was hanging down, despite the black insulation tape that had been copiously applied (as a stopgap, the oddball explained). Sensing my visible disappointment, the oddball offered me a testdrive. I was still interested enough in GT6's to accept, so I climbed in. As we pulled away from the curb, I was instantly attracted to the smooth but powerful roar of the straight six, and the bumpy "seat of the pants" ride. We left Oxford, and the oddball opened her up on the dual carriageway. I was hooked on GT6's, just not this particular one!!

The second GT6 was a 1972 L-reg, with rotoflex and overdrive, which was being sold by a motor trader for a private owner, who was apparently in the army and had been posted away (or something like that). In complete contrast to



the Oddball's carmine example, it had excellent bodywork and red paint, save a minor dent in the bonnet. The interior was good, save a few missing bits of trim & some tatty radio speakers that had been fitted somewhat untidy. The motortrader raised the car on his hydraulic ramp for me to view the underside & chassis - which to my surprise and delight was thoroughly cleaned & painted. I asked for a test drive, and the trader handed me the keys trustingly. The GT6 drove beautifully, and I was tempted to drive for miles & miles on my testdrive! The only real faults that the GT6 had were that it had no tax, the rear tyres needed replacement, and the overdrive was not working. I cheekily chipped the vendor down to 1500£ for cash, and left feeling downright ecstatic...

I loved the car. It was sexy & sleek - and attracted more than a few admiring glances from the girls in my town. Driving to work became a joy, a 7 mile blast of exhilaration along the West Oxfordshire country roads, with the return journey to look forward to at the end of the day!

I played football for a village team on Saturdays, and there would be no lack of volunteers amongst my team mates for a lift to the games! When the football season ended in the spring, I played cricket for another local side. It was a joy playing away games, cruising through the countryside to the opposition's village ground, sun shining, cricket bat in the back, the straight-six throbbing. Life was sweet.

It was now several months after the purchase, and I still hadn't sold my MG Montego. I was so desperate I was forced to accept a laughable offer of £1250 - I was desperate. I'd paid £1,750 for it just a year earlier. The £1250 didn't even cover the balance outstanding on the bank loan, and I now owe my Gran another £1500 for the GT6. My dad was hard-up, he couldn't afford to help me out.

For the next few months, virtually all my wages went on my loan, paying my Gran and mundane every day bills. I could not even afford to go out drinking with my mates, and it got very boring sitting at home, night after night. I even got a part-time job, as a delivery driver at a local

"dial-a-curry" warehouse. I would work my day job from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., leave for the dial-a-curry warehouse to start at 6 p.m., and work through till 11 p.m.

After 2 months of working myself to the bone, I'd had enough. I could not go on with all my cash going on the bank loan & paying for the GT6. The GT6 would have to go. I consoled myself that as soon as I was back on my feet financially, I'd get another GT6. I never have.

I decided to put the GT6 in for an MOT - it would be much easier to sell with a full 12 months MOT. It passed with ease - all it needed was a replacement set of seat belts, which were pretty cheap and easily fitted.

I had seen an advert for a Classic Car Showroom in Bristol, with a good selection of cars. "Classic Cars Bought & Sold, Part Exchange Either Way Welcomed" the advert proclaimed. They had a S-Reg Java Green TR7 for £800, with a full MOT. I rang the dealer and explained I needed to sell my GT6 quick, and was interested in the TR7 as a cheap stopgap - would he be interested in a quick cash deal? The dealer was interested and invited me down to the showroom.

I drove down to Bristol, the GT6 roaring heartily - the car obviously did not know it was being off loaded through no fault of its own. It was a sad journey.

The dealer did not take long to realize the GT6 was a good one - he offered me £1700 cash plus the TR7. I accepted and sadly handed over the keys and documents, driving home in my new TR7.

It turned out the TR7 was crap, with well dodgy electrics. But it got me to work for a while and the GT6 money cleared my debts. I didn't keep the TR7 long, but that's another story.

10 years on, and I have a few pounds in the bank, I'm looking for another GT6 at last. Unfortunately all the ones I look at are nowhere near as good as my earlier GT6, yet are more expensive! If only I could win the one being given away at [www.TriumphSpitfire.com](http://www.TriumphSpitfire.com)! ■

# Some People Will Do Anything for a Spitfire

BY MICHAEL HOWELL, GREER, SC

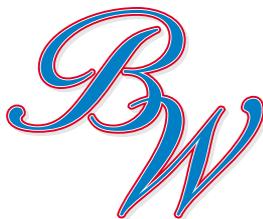
It was the end of my junior year in high school, I was 15 years old looking for a summer job. After spending the past two years reading books like "The Fast Green Car", "Nightmare Rally", etc... I wanted to work on cars. So I went looking, but without skills or training to my surprise no one would hire me. Finally I found a repair shop with several junked cars in their back lot. My job was to take the cars apart for their useable parts and scrap the rest. In exchange for this they offered me my choice of cars to be scrapped. They had three Saab 93's , a Datsun pickup, several Corvairs, two Hillmans, and two tramp Spitfires. A MarkII, missing an engine hood, and a MarkI complete but not running. For three months I labored to bring home my prize a 13 year old tramp Spitfire MarkI which I named Shebia. It was midway through the school year when Shebia was brought back to life by hours of cleaning and trying to figure out how things work. It must have taken me two or three hours just to figure out the hand brake was not broken. I still don't claim to know how SU carburetors

work but they finally did. Sputtering and belching black smoke, from the tea spoon of Kerosene I put into each cylinder, she roared back to life.

That year I learned to drive my little car on the winding roads around my home. It was a blast, but double clutching to down shift was a real challenge. To learn more I joined the local chapter of S.C.C.A. I wish I could say Shebia and I won every event we entered, but the truth is we didn't win a single event. The MG Midgets had my class rapped up from the beginning. But, if there had been a prize for the oldest car with the youngest driver we would have won every time. No one in my chapter seemed to know much about Spitfires so what I learned was all trial and error. One thing I did learn was that Shebia had a cold nature in fact if the temperature dropped below 20° Fahrenheit she would not start. I still had to get to school on those days, so I started leaving my drop light laying on the intake manifold just behind the carburetors. Then in the morning when I got up I plugged it in. By the time I was ready to go so was Shebia. If you do this don't forget to remove the light before you start up or it could get messy.

In my senior year Shebia and I had a parting of ways. It was in January and cold, sleet coming down coating everything it touched including Shebia. On my way home I was going slower than I usually did due to the weather, slow enough to stop...I thought. As I topped a hill I was faced with the bumper of a white transit bus which had stopped. I remember watching Shebia's hood crumple up like an accordion and wondering how I was going to fix this. Well I didn't. I ended up trading Shebia for another car. I have had many cars since that summer of 1973, but there has never been another Shebia. ■

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# A GT6 Restoration Project

BY ROBERT W. RIPPY, SUMMERTON, SC

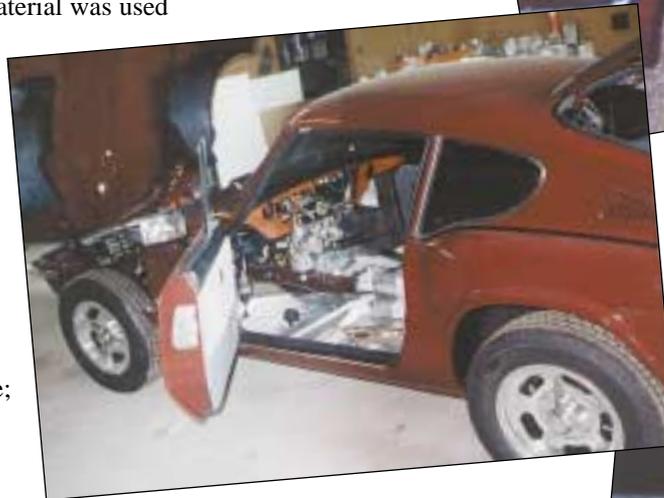
I already had a highly tuned spotless TR6, but my passion has always been to own a Spitfire GT6. One day while out I found one available. It had no interior, no seats, no bumper, no back glass, no dash, and the motor was no good. It was time to start at the beginning to build a GT6 to restore peoples pride in this little sports car.

The first thing was to get the body in shape. I took it to Greenville, SC for a chemical dip. What a nice job this does. It takes off all the old paint and primer and removes all the rust. This is the only way to start with a shiny new body. All the rust holes then need to be welded up. There is lots of time and work to finalize the car getting it ready to paint.

I began to work on the interior. It started with a British Wire Harness out of Chicago. Coupled with a Mahogany dash from Prestige Auto World that accents the Damson Red paint well. Sound deadening material was used on the floors and doors and the windows were slightly tinted. Re-chromed frames around vents and windows have finished the GT6's exterior nicely. I was fortunate to get the nice, aftermarket wheels with the car requiring only a good cleaning.

All of the suspension front and rear was completely redone; powder coated, new bushings, braided hoses, calipers & 1" sway bar. Brake lines were changed to stainless steel ones found in NY. New springs and shocks front and rear make this car better than came from the factory.

The car is only waiting on for a 2.5 ltr. TR6 engine to be installed. This will run an easy 170 HP. I hope to have the car ready for spring and hope to unveil the finished GT6 at the May 6 Townsend TN gathering or the Atlanta rally. ■



# The Most Successful Car Company Ever!

BY ROBERT M. BERT BENNETT, AUTO CLUB OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA



Perhaps it was just a moment in time, postwar Britain struggling to pay its war debts and exporting everything it could build, write, grow, or sing. Maybe it is a national characteristic, a need to create, and an ability to blast oneself out of the dull and dreary existence of small brick houses lined methodically in rows, and slogging through long cold winters and rain soaked springtimes that never really turn to summer. Possibly it is a combination of things, events and people which simply mixed and meshed to create things that will have a lasting impact on the history of pure enjoyment. Whatever analysis we chose to impose on it, three things came out of postwar Britain. They were unmistakably postwar, were nurtured in the 50's, and flowered in the 60's. Each of these things, in their own genre, were the most successful of their kind ever created. They all begin, interestingly, with a 'B'. They are, the Beatles, British Sportscars, and Bond-James Bond.

Life in the docklands of Liverpool, England, after World War 2 was a hard prosperous life. That four famous lads would forge a sound from their diverse backgrounds which would affect everything we know about popular music, and redefine the genre known as "Rock and Roll", is amazing enough. That they would leave their impact in only ten short years as the band we know and love is nothing short of incredible. The Beatles lived in a tough port town. Bustling with the imports and exports which were so vital to Britain's postwar survival, it connected them to the world in ways few young people of the time were. There was no mass communication with the exception of radio and the rare and limited BBC television. Yet they were exposed to imports of music, records, instruments, literature, food, and even people from faraway

lands - especially America. Their long days of hard work, and longer nights perfecting their musical craft gave them an edge and an energy, as well as an ability to dream of beautiful things they heard about, but never saw. Their magic was their vision. Visions of love, of sunny days (and how often "Good Day Sunshine" or "Here Comes the Sun" was their anthem), as well as deep melancholy remem-

brances of events they had shared or perhaps only dreamed about.

The next "B" to take a peek at is Bond - James Bond. The immortal creation of a very mortal man. Ian Fleming. Of course Fleming had been far more than a war correspondent during World War 2; Fleming was like his creation Bond, a spy. Well aware of the ugliness of war, and the treachery that lurked in corrupt politicians, gangland empires, and menacing criminal geniuses, Fleming never failed to see beauty everywhere he went. Like the Beatles, his most repetitive theme was sunshine. Fleming wrote his first, and probably quintessential Bond epic, "Dr. No", while living in his beloved Jamaica. A possession of the British empire until 1964 (the year of Fleming's death), this flamboyant writer chose to live in Jamaica and reveled in its sunshine, often placing his hero behind the wheel of an exotic sportscar in the case of "Dr No" a hired Sunbeam Alpine), if not driving his open top Bentley. (The Aston Martin was a 'Company' car!)

That the Beatles have left an indelible mark on pop music is without question. Also, the success of James Bond, still the most popular repetitive action film series in history, is well documented. What then of the third "B", the British Sportcar?

British Cars entered the postwar marketplace in a climate where any new car could be sold. The world was starved for vehicles. Herbert Austin, William Morris, John Black, Billy Rootes, and William Lyons, among others, had spent the war years dutifully producing munitions, airplanes, tanks, and the like, enjoying huge government subsidies for massive expansion of their factories to produce

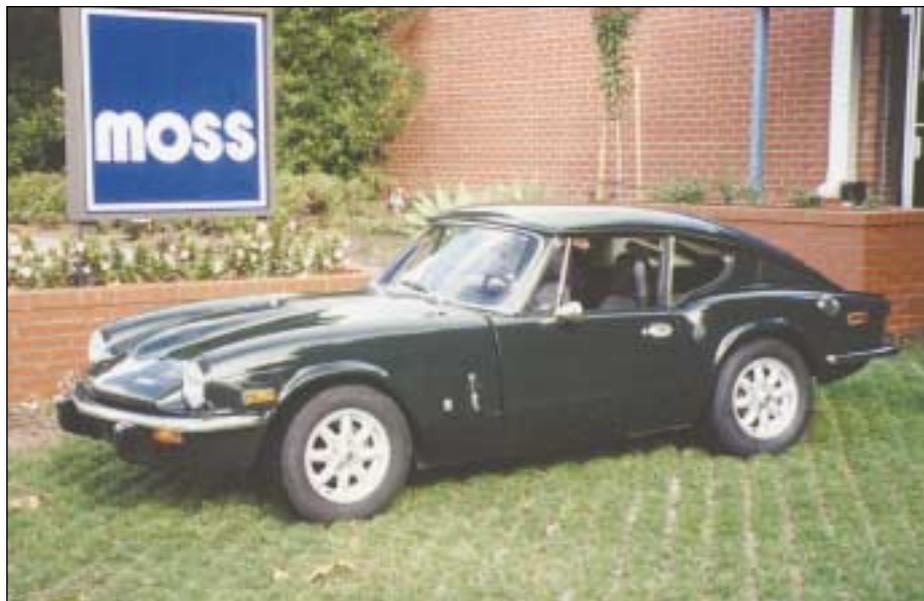
same. (Is there any truth to the story that Goering would not bomb Oxford as he thought Morris tanks were so dreadful they actually helped the Nazi war effort?)

Old automotive designs were hastily put back into production under the "Export or Die" banners made so famous by Austin in Longbridge. Yet designers like Walter Belgrove (Triumph), Wally Hassen, Bill Heynes, and Bill Lyons (Jaguar), John Black (Standard), Don Healey, and countless others, had spent the war years dreaming of when the lights would come on again. One legend has Hassen and Heynes designing the XK engine sitting on firewatch in Coventry, and penning the famous overhead camshafts by the light of fires from Nazi bombs!

As these cars were bought infusing much needed funds to the automakers, business men with great vision united with these dreamers to design cars for the world like the Standard Vanguard; cars for celebrities like the XK 120; and cars for the open road like the MGTC and Triumph TR-2. These cars also captured something adored by the Beatles and by James Bond: they welcomed the sun.

Of all these car companies, the one that is arguably the most successful the world has ever seen is Triumph. Like the Beatles, Triumph cars enjoyed, in a relatively short period of time, a succession of "hits" that remain influential to the thinking of every sportscar designer to this day. One charming and apparently true story, has Harry Webster, chief engineer during the hayday of TR sportscar design, contacted in 1989 by engineers from Mazda's design studio. "We have tried over 100 exhausts for our MX-5 "Miata" sportscar. How did you get the Triumphs to sound that way? they asked. "Well", said Webster "We shoved a few broom handles up the back end till we got the sound we wanted then the boys welded the baffles to match it". No wonder Triumph "swept" the competition!

The first Triumphs were not rehashed pre war designs. They were new; they were fast; they were powered with the Vanguard's sturdy motor; they were reliable as the Tractors that give them their components, and they let the sun in. That the Standard Vanguard is one of the most wonderful and evocative names for a world car is a matter of opinion, but to argue that the Triumph Spitfire isn't the greatest name ever bestowed upon a sporting car is either just being stubborn or a bad case of sour grapes. Contrived names like Lexus, Infiniti, and Acura; or mere numerical designations without a meaningful Marque ahead of them, simply do not stir the soul the way Alpine and Tiger do, or for that matter Scimitar (from Reliant) and



many others. Certainly the Jaguar name can stand alone on any bootlid, but even names like the Mini, the Imp, and the Avenger, conjure images worthy of affection and immediate identification of what the car is about. The obvious Triumph Hurricane sadly never occurred, but the Stag was certainly another inspired monicker.

With the advent of the Miata and the RX-7 Roadster, Mazda wasted no time filling the void left by the closure of Triumph and MG factories with the end of British Leyland in 1980. Today a flurry of new convertibles, imitating the size if not the style of Triumphs, have emerged and met with great success. Like Bond, the buyers seek adventure, style, and a little bit of risk taking in their transportation needs. Like the Beatles, the romance, of sunshine, country roads, and the heartthrob by your side is imagery that still sells cars as it did when the Spitfire was new. As the ads beckoned to Triumph buyers in the twilight of those years, "You not only get a car and a girl, but a piece of history". History that is unmistakably the product of resilient people, not afraid to dream during the darkest of times; a people who gave us ways to celebrate every sunny day, even if we might get wet in the process.

Robert owns a 1969 GT-6, a 1979 Spitfire and a 1967 Spitfire. He recently sold his 1972 Mark 3 GT-6 to Bill Hopper, of Moss Motors in California. Hopefully we will see it on the cover of Moss's catalog of GT-6 Parts..due out soon? ■



# The Making Of A SpitCat Part 2

BY ANDY PREVELIG

I had pretty much decided on an early Corvette rear end assembly, finding the Jaguar rear ends were very expensive if in good shape. One problem using the 'Vette rear end is that it had a five-bolt pattern hub. That would mean that I couldn't use the same 13" alloy rims and Kumhos that were on the front...unless...

I toyed briefly with the idea of getting a 'Vette rear end assembly and cutting off the hubs, welding the GT6 four-bolt in their stead. But reason prevailed as I envisioned such a welded-on hub flying off at speed or with the lateral forces of hard cornering. Plus, the five-bolt circle would be a larger diameter, which would have more strength than a four-bolt.

Strength is what I needed behind the V-12; strength and traction. So what if the wheel patterns didn't match from front to rear? I would use a 15" wheel, which would also allow the use of a wider tire. Power isn't much good if you can't get it to the pavement. The only disadvantage I could imagine would be that the final drive ratio

would be altered by a larger diameter tire. (I had seen the advantages of a small diameter rear tires at the local autocross where a Mini Cooper seemed to teleport from corner to corner.)

But I had faith the big Jaguar engine would not be fazed by the larger tires and the last thing I wanted was to have the car sitting on the line while it simply burned the rear tires to the rims. As I said in a previous part of this series, I had the engineless Corvette as an investment...never to be cannibalized. But...what would be the harm in just borrowing two wheels and tires? After all, the 'Vette was already up on blocks with the tires stored away to preserve them. Rationalization is a wonderful thing!

Examining the stored tires I found the rears were at least 13" wide! I knew the previous owner had not only removed the engine, but a nitrous-oxide system as well. I guess he needed some serious rubber at the back end. Even with my rather extreme automotive philosophy of 'too much is almost enough', this would be over-kill.



The front tires were about 10" wide and this, by comparison, seemed perfect. Speaking of comparisons, look at the photo of the SpitCat tire evolution, from the original at the left, the current front 185/80-13 Kumho, and the intended rear 255/60-15 Cooper.



I would of course have to enlarge and flare the rear fenders of the SpitCat body, but not much work had been done on that area yet, so I wouldn't be tearing up something I had already done. (Unlike the many hours of designing and building the short-lived GT-6 rear end and suspension idea.)

Sometimes things just seem to fall into place. Such serendipity occurred at our annual British Car and Bike Day a while ago. As usually happens at events the Temple of Triumph hosts, a few of us were sitting around, slaking the thirst that telling lies about our cars always brings. I happened to ask J.K. Jackson, our local British car guru, if he knew where I could get an early Corvette rear end assembly. He asked, 'What is wrong with a Jaguar rear end?' 'Too expensive.' I said. Well, it turned out that he had a Jaguar E-Type rear end assembly at his shop that he could sell for a reasonable price.

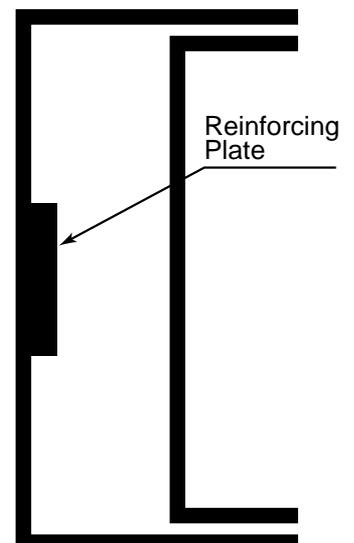
With the blessings (read 'permission') of an understanding wife, I went to his shop to see the assembly. The main unit was complete and appeared to be in good shape. He had one half-shaft he had just reconditioned with new bearing and universals, and would recondition the second one. Sold! I drove home with yet another treasure

in the bed of my trunk. One of the first tasks was to go over the assembly, cleaning the grease, etc. (after all, it was a British auto part).

Beneath the layer of grease and grit, there was no rust. An inventory of what the assembly consisted of included a limited-slip differential, inboard disk brakes, half-shafts with universals at each end going into massive aluminum hub carriers which sat between two Koni adjustable shocks and coils on each side. The entire assembly was supported in a steel 'bridge-piece' which is how the assembly originally attached to the E-type body. Now the entire power-train of the SpitCat would be a Jaguar. I was very fortunate that I had decided to make the SpitCat the

same width as an E-Type, seeing that now that's the assembly I would be installing. What was not so fortunate was the way in which that rear had to be attached. In Spitfires and GT-6's the differential and rear suspension all mount above the frame; but the E-type is designed to mount below a niche in the monocoque body. Time for some major 'metal-morphosis'.

It was necessary to join the new material to an area where the channels were straight if I wanted to slide the 2 X 3 tubing into them. So, putting the extended side rails on blocks once more, I cut off the curved rear third of the chassis (ouch!). My first snag was when I tried to slide the new 2 X 3's into the remaining frame. First, a word about the original chassis design: These chassis frames were fabricated from two "U"-shaped 16 gauge channels as seen above. This construction allowed the factory to weld in reinforcing plates where needed, before the two parts of the channel were welded together. I wanted to have at least a 6-7" overlap inside the frame since this area would bear a lot of stress. When I Couldn't get the 2 X 3 much beyond 3" inside the frame I dis-



covered one of those reinforcing plates blocking it. Out came a long chisel to clear the way for the 2 X 3. What happens when you chisel such a plate off the inside of such a channel is that it gets knocked way further down the channel where, if left there, would lend a very interesting rattle. Time to go fishing with a long rod bent into a hook at one end. The stray rattle-maker was retrieved and I wound up getting a 7" overlap, which was fine. Next would be the near-vertical part of the new frame to allow the E-type bridge to fit beneath.

I had marked a reference point on both outside rails and measured from these to the center of each axle/halfshaft before the GT-6 assembly and frame were cut off. This 19 1/2" distance would be the target for each E-type halfshaft in order to keep the same wheelbase. Measuring from the halfshafts to the front of the bridge-piece showed me how long the lower horizontal channels (the ones I had overlapped into the original GT-6 channels) had to be. Cutting these into the proper length, I welded the near-verticals on at an angle the same as the front of the E-type bridge-piece. More measuring to have the upper horizontal channels at the proper height for the E-type unit and they were welded to the near-verticals. I wanted the new unit to have 1" less than the original E-type ground clearance, to compensate for the larger diameter of the rear tires.

The lateral spacing of the horizontals was dictated by the distance between the two original GT-6 channels. This proved to be too narrow, so the upper horizontal were splayed out toward the back so they would be positioned over the mounting areas on the E-type bridge-piece. Each of these new channels were 11 gauge 2 X 3s, but for safety I welded reinforcing plates over each joint. I made two 8" long brackets by cutting a piece of 2 X 3 down diagonally across opposite corners to form two 8" "L's". These were welded to the outside of the upper horizontal, flush with the channel bottoms.

The E-type unit is pretty heavy, so I used several sets of bar-clamps from the bridge-piece to the upper horizontal. By cranking these clamps alternately, the bridge piece slowly rose to meet

the upper horizontal. After measuring lateral and fore/aft distances to the unit, two 3/8" holes were bored in each 8" bracket to correspond to mounting holes in the bridge-piece. Bolts through these, with an 11 gauge backing plate beneath each side, attached the unit firmly.

The original Jaguar rear end assembly used two-stamped-steel radius arms attached to the body by rubber mounts. These seemed as though they would allow too much movement under acceleration, so instead I fabricated 3/4 " rods which were hemi-jointed from the original E-type anchor points to the SpitCat chassis.

With the set-back position of the engine/transmission, the driveshaft would be less than a foot long. This made it more critical than the flanges of the transmission and the differential be lined up. This meant raising the rear transmission mount an inch. Time to mount the borrowed wheels. I discovered that even though the E-type and Corvette hubs had the same bolt pattern, the lugs would not fit. The 'Vette hub used 7/16" threads and the E-type had 1/2". A trip to the auto parts store for ten 1/2" lug nuts.

With wheels on, it was time to remove the blocks and let the SpitCat stand on its own feet. The upper channels showed no deviation from horizontal while bearing the weight of the car. Now it was time to roll the car onto the driveway to photograph the rear end.

I used the same 1 1/2" square tubing that was used for the front sub-frame for building the rear sub-frame which would hold the gas tank (or fuel cell later) and serve as mounting points for the rear portion of the body. For now I would use the gas tank from the GT-6, since it had a much lower profile than one from a Spitfire.

I welded the assembly to the upper horizontal of the chassis and triangulated it to the rear near-verticals. It was a great temptation to weld directly to the rear end assembly, making it a structural part, but I really wanted to allow the rear end to be removed easily for any repairs in the future.

The GT-6 gas tank was originally mounted by the flange surrounding it, so I welded brackets to the sub-frame for the four flange holes and



mounted the tank with rubber bushings.

I was lucky enough to find a decent roll bar with the proper width for the SpitCat, made of 1.75" S.C.C.A. - legal tubing. All I would have to do would be to fabricate rear braces of the same material. I welded a 3/16" plate to each area of the outer frame rail where the roll bar would attach, then welded the roll bar to these, checking for vertical. Next would be the rear braces which would extend from the top of the hoop, 40 degrees from the vertical, to each upper horizontal member of the new rear frame, above the rear end assembly.



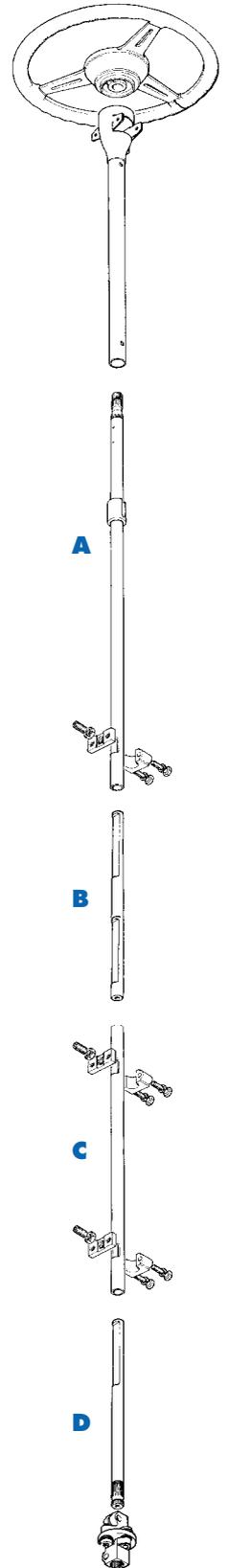
Where to make attachment points for the racing harness? I don't want to use the inner fenders. Even though that seems to work for some other

cars, the Spitfire inner fenders weren't really strong enough. The safest idea would be to attach the harness shoulder anchors to the roll bar. I would need another length of the 1.75" tubing for each side, that spanned between the vertical portion of the hoop and the rear braces. Since one end of the horizontal tube would mate at the right angle to the vertical, and the other end would fit against the 40 degree angle of the rear brace tube, getting an exact fit with the proper profile at each end would be very tricky. I came up with a solution that

worked fine. Using cardboard from a file folder, rolled into a tube and taped, I made a mock-up tube which was slide-fit over the 1.75" steel tubing. Fitting the mock-up in position was a matter of successive approximations until the cardboard was a perfect fit. (Much easier than trial and error with a metal tube.) Then the mock-up was slid over the metal tube and the end shapes were transferred to the metal by spraying with a contrasting color paint. Now I could shape the tubing ends for an exact fit. Next would be finalizing the steering column.

It was time to complete the steering column. The seat was temporarily positioned and I measured what the ideal steering wheel distance would be. This told me just how long the steering column had to be. The Spitfires and GT-6's use a two-section column with a sliding joint held by safety clamps to make it collapsible and adjustable within limits. With four steering assemblies to play with, I figured it would be easy to lengthen a column to what was needed.

I would use an upper shaft and lower shaft as original (see A and D in the Diagram), with a modified unit between them. To make the modified unit, I would use an old upper shaft which



had been cut down sometime ago (where the steering wheel splines were) by 2". I intended to cut this to length and grind down the top 4" of the remaining shaft to a small enough diameter to fit into the original upper shaft. It would be tricky to grind so that the smaller diameter was absolutely concentric, since I didn't have a large metal lathe, and the last thing I needed was a wobbly steering column.

By taking my drill press, which has a 5/8" chuck, and laying it across a workbench, all I would need was some form of tail stock to make an extemporaneous lathe. First the shaft had to be cut to the desired length...about 5" shorter than it was. Then I could make a wooden base and tail stock for my 'lathe'. With the shaft held between the chuck and tail stock and rotate at low speed, I could grind down to the smaller diameter and be assured the result was concentric. What a great idea! Lo and behold when the cut was made I found the shaft was hollow. I had assumed that the shaft was a solid bar with the lower end bored out, since the previously cut upper end was solid. Apparently the 'solid' end was simply a very tight insert. Duh.

This, however would make work much easier. with the shaft now revealed as a tube, a wide slot could be cut near the upper end to duplicate the female configuration of the bottom end. (C in the diagram). A short length of the smaller diameter lower male shaft (B) with a flat area ground in, would tie the pieces together.

Using three of the steering shaft safety clamps, the assembly was a solid as an original unit. With the column held in place by a wire to the cowl-support hoop, brackets could be made to secure the column housing.

Now that the steering column was permanently mounted, I would see how much effort it took to turn the front wheels. What with the added length of the rack, stickier tires, and a bit more weight on the front end, I was concerned that the steering

might be sluggish and hard. I didn't want to hassle with the complications of installing a power assist on the steering system if it could be avoided.

Even with the SpitCat sitting stationary, the steering felt perfect - very easy to turn, but with absolutely no slack. (A sigh of relief, and a cold beer followed!)

During this project I had been cutting a lot of sheet steel and going through many jigsaw blades. Frugal as I am, (read 'cheap') it bothered me that the used blades looked as perfect except for the small cutting area where the teeth were virtually worn to nothing. Beyond this worn area the teeth were unscathed. An idea! I cut a rectangle of 1/2" plywood the same size as the jigsaw base. Bolting this to the base raised the saw enough so that the cutting area was now where the unscathed teeth were. This doubled the useful life of the blades.

Long rocker panels needed to be fabricated to replace the rusted pieces below both doors. How do you put a nice smooth curve in a 4' length of 18 gauge sheet steel without a bending brake or set of rollers? In keeping with my D.I.Y. (again read 'cheap') philosophy of only using a professional shop for things which I absolutely cannot do with the limited equipment and/or skills I have, the following system came into play:

I laid out a 4' x 4' sheet of 18 g. steel on the driveway and clamped one end to a long 1 1/2" x 1 1/2" angle bar. I needed something strong and



cylindrical to form the sheet metal around. It must be about 4" in diameter (you need a form that is of a smaller diameter than the desired curve, since the sheet metal will spring back a bit after being rolled around the form).

I used one of the glass-pak mufflers from the SpitCat as a form, and four bar clamps to fix the sheet metal to the steel angle.

With the muffler clamped in place, I used a large pipe wrench on the angle bar to roll the sheet metal around the core form. Result: a smooth evenly curved section that would be cut from the 4' x 4" sheet for the rocker panel.

A variation on this setup is to replace the core cylinder with two more angle bars to make a sheet metal brake for forming even flanges and sharp bends in metal panels.

Next, I would tackle the rear body sections, flaring the wheel wells for the large tires and dealing with the ravages of rust on the parts-car panels.

The body panels...where to start? The two donor parts cars were just that - too much rust to ever be restored. Life would have been a lot easier if I started with sound body panels, simply adding sheet metal to expand the length and width, but I would never butcher a classic unless there was no hope for it. Every panel except the door boot lids (and even they would need much resurfacing) had fallen victim to metal virus, so there was much sheet metal to add.

The rear quarter sections of the body were fairly easy to add, since I had temporarily attached the left-side piece months ago to check the over-all proportions and had built brackets on the new rear sub-frame at the right locations. Resizing these panels was an easy matter of inserting sheet steel at the center of each wheel arch to lengthen it by four inches. With both rear sections on, I could now fabricate the rear deck and valance pieces to span the 14" gap between the two sides. For the deck section, I again used file



folder material to mock up the required shape of the piece before cutting the steel to that shape, because the fit around the roll bar supports was tricky.

Once that was done, I tackled the job of fabricating the boot lid. I used two boot lids, from parts cars 'A' and 'B'. The 'A' lid had rust in the hinge areas and at all four corners, but the center area, including the boot latch, was fine. Car 'B's' lid, fortunately had opposite problems (although the rear edges had lots of Bondo and would require rebuilding the sheet metal), so taking the best of each would make a good beginning for the SpitCat boot lid. Lid 'B' was cut into four quarters, each 15" wide. The center area of the lid 'A' was cut to 28.25" and then cut across between front and rear. Assembled, these pieces would give the required 58.25" width. The depth was increased by adding a 4" strip as seen in the photo.

The method I used on all these body panels was to piece and fit them together until I had a complete enlarged body, and then work on correcting the many rusted areas and dents once I was certain everything fit.

The original Spitfire boot lid used a steel tube frame underneath for reinforcement against twisting as it was raised. With the boot lid now almost five feet wide, reinforcement would cer-

tainly be needed. Fortunately I had two tube frames in good condition, so widening and lengthening the reinforcement was fairly straightforward.

Now the boot lid was installed, although it was just bits and pieces at this point. A fiber-glass shell would be built up over it later, using the same plan I had for the bonnet.

Since I would be using the 10" wide tires from the Corvette ( or maybe the 13" wide tires later), the rear fenders needed to be flared. The process began with my trusty file-folder material to make a taped-on mock-up of the flare. The curvature of this cardboard flare was marked on the fender with a black felt-tip marker so I could put in the same bend in the metal version and position it properly. The cardboard mock-up shape was transferred to 18 gauge steel and cut out.



I cut the original fender parallel to and 1/2" outside the felt-tip lines. The inner wheel well was also cut back to provide more tire clearance for the width and to provide for vertical movement of the rear suspension. The 1/2" area outside the felt-tip lines was notched out in several places to facilitate bending it out at the same angle the flare would have. this made attachment

points to which the steel flare could be clamped while the flare-to-fender joint was welded.

Once the flare was attached, the outer edge was trimmed to a suitable shape. Fiberglass laminations would hide the welds and build up a fillet where the flare joined the fender panel. I would build up an area just below the outer edge to strengthen it and eliminate any sharp edges.

Now I needed to modify the right-hand rear fender as well, using the same flare pattern, reversed. After cutting out the sheet metal version, I needed to figure out some way to ensure that the right hand flare was at the exact same curvature and position at the left. I drew lines on the bare metal fender panels with the felt-tip marker. Using the 'B' posts and top fender seams as fixed reference points, I measured and laid out the grid of 2" squares on both sides. This allowed me to transfer the exact flare line to the right

hand side, much like using graph paper to copy a curve, one square at a time - only on a larger scale. Once that was done I could begin the arduous task of repairing the various rusted out areas of the complete body.

All the paint was stripped off by using a propane torch and sharp spatula. This of course showed up more Bondo in areas which at first appeared pretty sound.

Then a rotary wire brush in a drill cleaned the surfaces to bright metal. One problem with using propane instead of a chemical stripper was that it also melted out any lead-filled areas like where the top of the 'B' post joined the rear fender. (duh)

The doors would not get the lengthening treatment the other areas of the body did since they looked just the right length in original form. They were gutted through, handles and external locks removed, and the window channels were welded over. I kept the latch mechanism, which still could be operated by reaching over the inside.

Coming next issue: SpitCat Part III...Soon it would be time to finalize and install the exhaust system. ■

# Overdrive Not Driving?

## Common problems and some DIY cures.

BY JOHN KIPPING

The first important matter to determine is if you have a D type or J type overdrive fitted, the two types are different and suffer different faults, originally D type overdrives were fitted to all Vitesse and GT6, the Spitfire was changed for 1974 and was fitted up to chassis number FH60000, if in doubt have a look. A D type has the solenoid on the right hand side, a J type on the left.

### THE D TYPE OVERDRIVE

Before you do anything check the overdrive is not stuck in or coming in automatically as it gives the impression of not working. (The car will also 'slip' in reverse). This can be very bad solenoid adjustment or more usually a bit of stuff in the operating valve. Remove valve as per workshop manual and clean it. Check for black hairy bits as per 5 below.

A lot of overdrive faults come from an electrical fault. What *should* happen is the operating switch should operate a relay which then activates the solenoid by pulling a plunger back. This plunger then operates a set of points in the back of the solenoid so that the initial 30 amps necessary for pulling the plunger is reduced to a couple of amps to hold it. If the points fail to open then the 30 amps leads to smoking wiring, and often a burnt out solenoid. Checking its operation is simply a matter of running the car with tunnel cover and solenoid side plate removed (the one that says Laycock de Normanville overdrive etc. in blue or black printing), and engaging the switch (remember the car needs to be in 3rd or 4th) and check the plunger pulls the arm back so that the hole in it lines up with the hole in the case (check with 1/8 drill). Waggle the gearstick about to make sure the cut-off switch at the front end of the gearchange is working properly. Running 12 volts straight to the solenoid will show if any

fault is electrical or not.

So after ascertaining the solenoid is functioning correctly and the arm is pulled back the required amount, the overdrive can then either: 1 - do nothing, 2 - come in but not hold when trying to accelerate, 3 - make funny noises or vibrations, 4 - work correctly when cold but not hot or 5 - possibly even work correctly all the time.

If everything appears to be OK then all you can really check is the filter, this is located on the LHS under an oblong plate and can be removed and the filter and magnetic cardboard rings cleaned. Lots of grey slime is normal, small black hairy particles are not and show that the clutch or sliding member is breaking up, at some point the overdrive will start to slip and the clutch will need replacing, no special tools are required for this and with care the overdrive can be removed on its own from the car.

If you happen to have a 0 to 1000 PSI (that's pounds per square inch) pressure gauge and can screw it into the testing point (the plug that hold the operating valve in) then the running pressure can be checked. Excessively low pressure can be upped by putting shims (washers) into the bottom of the right hand bottom plug, a bit awkward in the car, and don't lose any of the other bits that fall out. Pressure above 400 PSI is adequate. The higher the pressure the quicker the unit will work but the more strain on the clutch lining.

**1. Nothing happens** - see if there is any operating pressure at all by running the car with the operating valve plug loose, oil should ooze out (even without the overdrive engaged). If no oil the unit will have to be removed as the fault could be worn or missing pump cam, stuck/damaged pump (most likely), missing pump ball bearing. If there is pressure then it may be possible to get the unit working by checking the relief

valve as this could have stuck open. In a car that has stood for a long time the clutch can stick, drive the car, operate the overdrive and whack the brake ring to try and free it.

**2. Comes in, but won't hold properly.** The most likely cause is a worn clutch, (refer black hairy bits). It can be low pressure due to wear or a worn cam but this is rare. The adapter plate could be at fault, (yes really). The four studs that can be seen when the unit is removed move forwards when the unit is operated, sometimes the adapter plate is not deep enough to allow this to happen (and it can occur as a clutch wears). Drill big relieving holes in the adapter plate, there will be marks where the studs have been hitting.

**3. Making funny noises or vibrates etc.** Its knackered and will probably need a rebuild. If a unit has been recently stripped and is working apart from vibrating, the planet gear assembly has been fitted incorrectly (refer to a workshop manual)

**4. Works fine cold, but not hot (may slip or not hold properly).** Causes and solutions as per 2. As a temporary measure the pressure can be raised by fitting a 7/16 flat washer into the relief valve plug, don't overdo it without a pressure gauge.

Other do's and don'ts: Hit the plugs with a hammer before trying to loosen them. It is not necessary to remove the drain plug (LH underneath). When removing the overdrive always leave the adapter plate on the gearbox. Never use gear oil additives, (they can contaminate the clutch) Change the gear oil at least every 50000 miles, it is working very hard. Expensive (often synthetic) gear oils are well worth it, lower viscosity oils can be used in very cold climates. And finally, there is no easy way to get at the bottom solenoid screw.

## THE J TYPE OVERDRIVE

The J type overdrive was standardized on all Triumphs from 1974 so that this section covers Spitfire from FH60000, all Dolomites, later 2000/2500, late TR6 and Stag. These overdrives have also been retro fitted to many earlier cars,

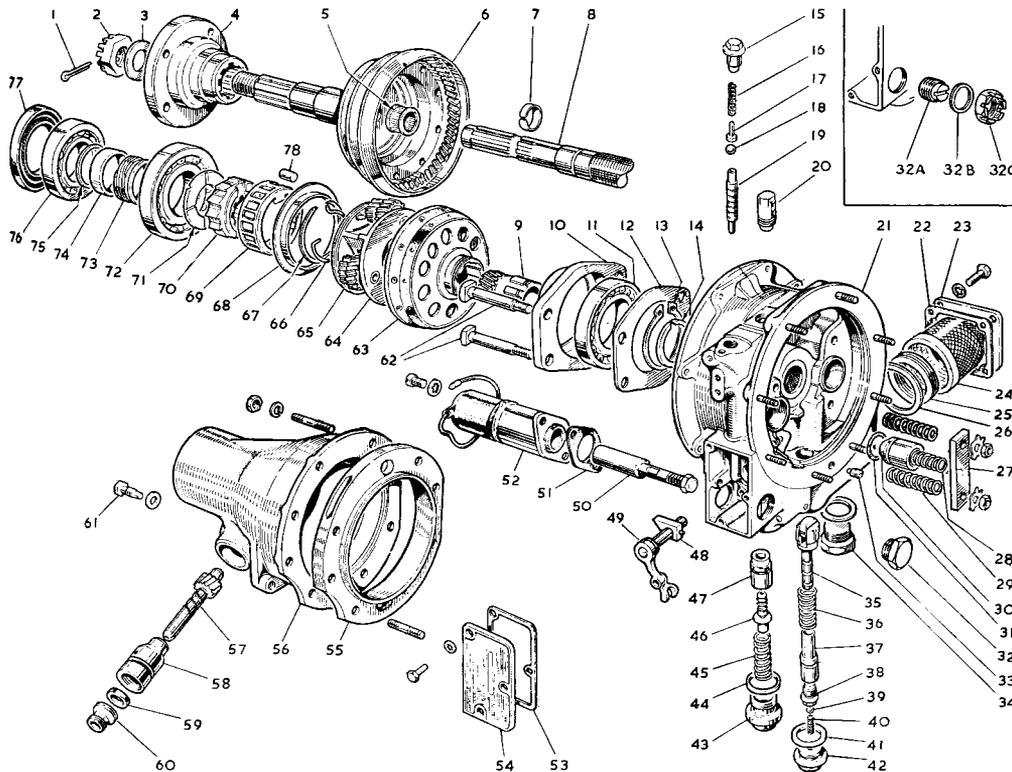


FIG 1 J Type Overdrive Details

Key to Fig 1	1 Splitpin	2 Nut	3 Washer	4 Coupling flange	5 Needle bearing	6 Annulus
7 Spring	8 Mainshaft	9 Sun gear	10 Thrust ring	11 Thrust bearing	12 Retaining plate	13 Circlip
14 Snap ring	15 Plug	16 Spring	17 Plunger	18 Ball	19 Operating valve	20 Lubrication bush
21 Front casing	22 Gasket	23 Coverplate	24 Filter	25 Magnetic rings	26 Rubber/steel washer	27 Bridge piece
28 Bias spring	29 Clutch return spring	30 Piston	31 Piston O-ring	32 Plug	32A Adjuster screw*	32B Fibre washer*
32C Locknut*	33 Pump locating screw	34 Plug	35 Pump plunger	36 Return spring	37 Pump body	38 Non-return valve body
39 Ball	40 Spring	41 Washer	42 Plug	43 Plug	44 Washer	45 Spring
46 Relief valve plunger	47 Relief valve body	48 Cam	49 Operating lever	50 Solenoid plunger	51 Gasket	52 Solenoid
53 Gasket	54 Coverplate	55 Brake ring	56 Rear casing	57 Speedometer pinion	58 Speedometer pinion bush	59 Seal
60 Screwed end	61 Locating screw	62 Bolts	63 Cone clutch	64 Planet carrier assembly	65 Planet gear	66 Spring
67 Circlip	68 Oil thrower	69 Cage	70 Inner member	71 Thrust washer	72 Front bearing	73 Speedometer drive gear
74 Distance piece	75 Spacer	76 Rear bearing	77 Oil seal	78 Roller		

\*These items replace item 32 on later units

and can be distinguished by the solenoid on the LHS (all D type and A type have the solenoid on the RHS). I will not attempt to cover all the minor variations in specification as there are also units fitted which originally came from Volvos, Ford Transits and Sherpa vans, just to deal with common problems and what to do about them.

In the Triumph range the units fitted to single rail gearboxes (Dolomite and Spitfire with reverse by 3rd gear) have a different rear housing fitted so that the gearchange can be bolted on the top, apart from this all other units can be interchanged (but pay attention to different rear flanges and speedo drive ratios) if the operating pressure is set correctly. (The more torque an engine produces the higher the operating pressure required).

**Oil leaks** - before attempting to trace a leak make sure that the gearbox/overdrive unit has a breather somewhere that is clear. Blocked or missing breathers cause oil to be forced out. If an overdrive fails to operate the first thing to check is the electrical circuit, most cars do not have a relay fitted (it isn't necessary with the low power consumption of the solenoid) but as a lot of solenoids make very little noise when engaging a circuit test is often required. (Note that Sprint/2000/2500/Stag have a separate switch on the gearchange for overdrive 3rd and overdrive 4th, all other cars have one cut-off switch).

The units themselves are fairly reliable (the filtration system is excellent) and it is the solenoid which causes most of the problems. If there is power to the solenoid and the overdrive either won't engage, engages cold and not hot, or won't disengage then the solenoid is very likely the culprit. To remove and replace this a 1 inch spanner is required but it must be no more than 3 mm thick. The original solenoids have the outer metal case held in position with four small roll pins, if the case is very loose (which can cause incorrect operation) then it is possible to tighten it up with care and it may work again.

The only other DIY option is to remove a tiny internal circlip and withdraw the operating piston, there are then two external and two internal O rings to replace if you can get hold of them

- if you don't fancy doing all this (and there is about a 30% chance of it working properly again after fiddling with) then replacement is the only option. New solenoids are around £75, but the outer case is swaged on and does not come loose.

All J type solenoids are interchangeable. Later Dolomite and Spitfire overdrives (after 1978) have a badly made centre to the one way bearing and from around 30000 miles can give the impression of clutch slip, quick getaways from the lights can lead to an embarrassing lack of forward motion. This problem and in reality all other faults mean the unit has to be removed from the car. Although it just about possible to remove the sump and gain access to the fine filter (RHS), pump ball bearing (centre) and relief valve (LHS) it is very unlikely that anything can be gained by doing so. (Very occasionally the relief valve may stick which means the unit can't work). The whole assembly is not too bad to work on and as long as all bits are put back in the right order and the right way round (without too many left over) then it should work again. The one way bearing is awkward to refit, a piston ring compressor can be used if all else fails.

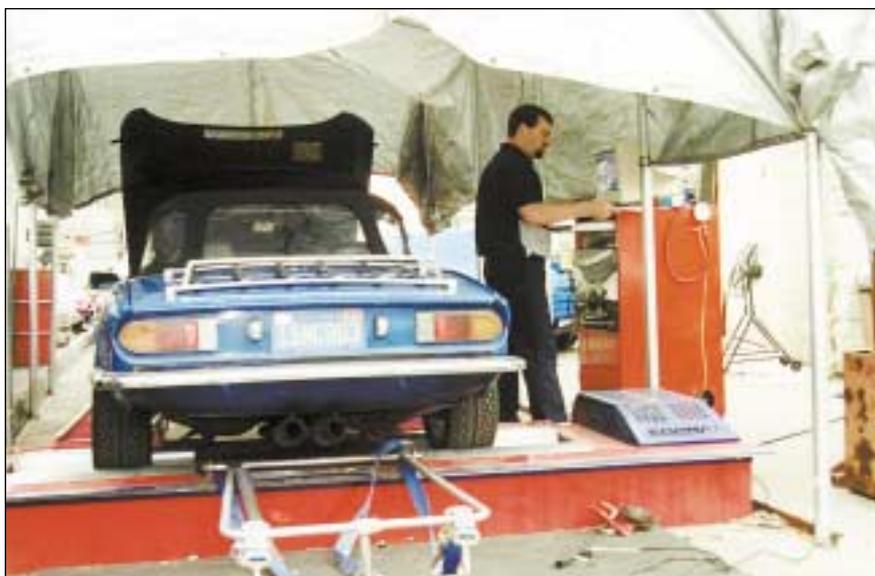
If you really have the inclination and a 0 - 1000 PSI pressure gauge and a fitment to screw into the test point (the plug just under the front of the solenoid) then the operating pressure can be tested, around 350 PSI for a 1500 engine going up to say 550 PSI for a Stag. Altering the pressure requires fiddling with the relief valve (two types fitted) and is beyond the scope of this article.

Noisy bearings can be replaced by competent amateurs. Other failures, rare but often fatal, are probably best left to professionals. Note for information there are two different ratios of J type fitted, with 2.5 cars having a 28% ratio and all others 25%, (the first two figures of the plate on the RHS of the front case is the ratio). In addition some later Volvo units are 27%.

Use good oil in the gearbox/overdrive, it is worth the extra (particularly synthetics) as it is working very hard and changing it every 50000 miles is well worth the effort. ■

# The Spitfire Passes the Dyno Test!

BY TOM BROBERG



We all know that those high-tech, expensive engine add-ons increase horsepower but the problem is we never know just how much. Well, the numbers don't lie. The dyno tests involved two cars; one similar to one many of us have and a decked out firebreather.

**CAR 1:** The "Seattle Spit" was a relatively stock Spitfire that was sent down to P.R.I. in San Diego from Seattle, WA. It was a flawless, well cared for warehouse queen with a mere 11,000 miles on the clock. Upon receiving the car we had noticed that it had a untuned, out-of-the-box Weber DGV, stock exhaust, and cat & air pump removed.

**CAR 2:** The blue 1976 "Surf Spitfire" that was first featured in Issue #4 of Spitfire and GT6 Magazine and is owned by Jeremy McGinnis. It was to be upgraded to a stage one engine over the winter at P.R.I. (Performance Research Industries (619) 286-1566). Stage one upgrades include: increased compression (10.0:1), a ST-2 max street profile reground cam, a modified Monza header, free flow exhaust, (P.R.I.'s as well) and the Keihin quad carburetors.

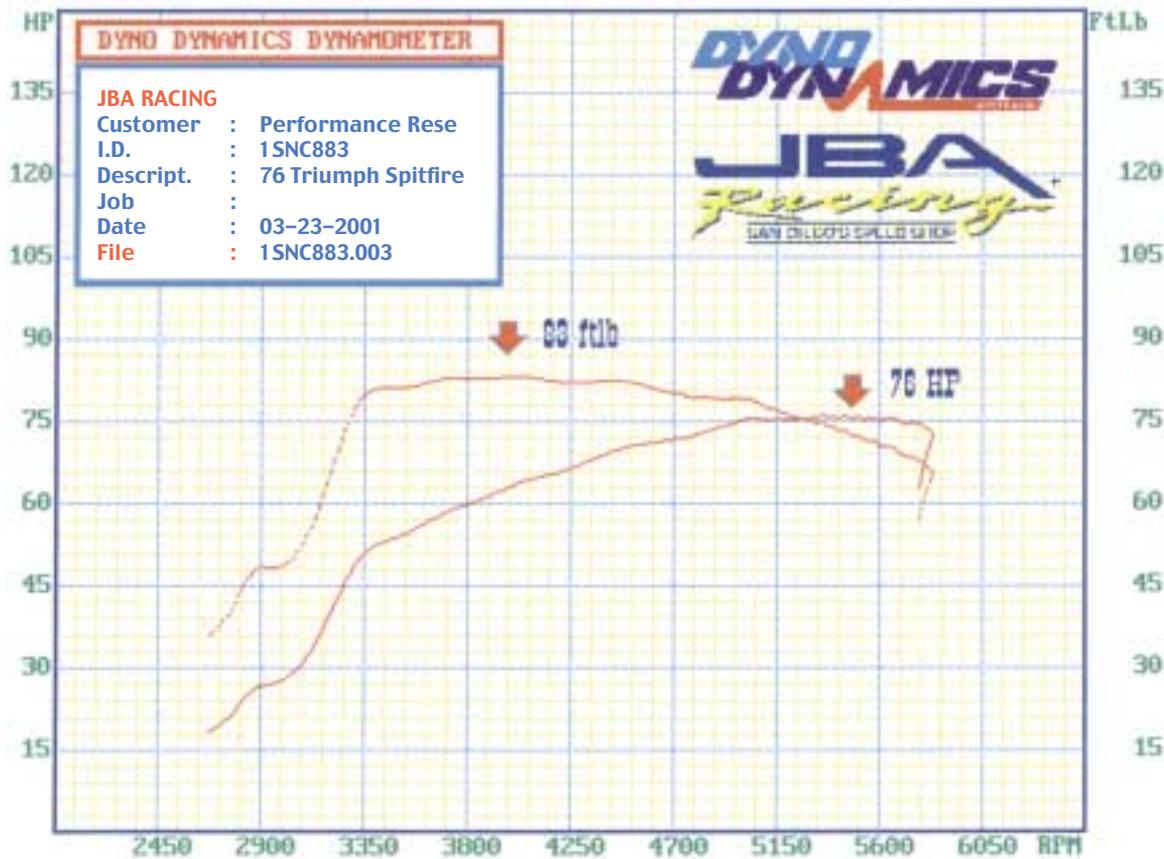
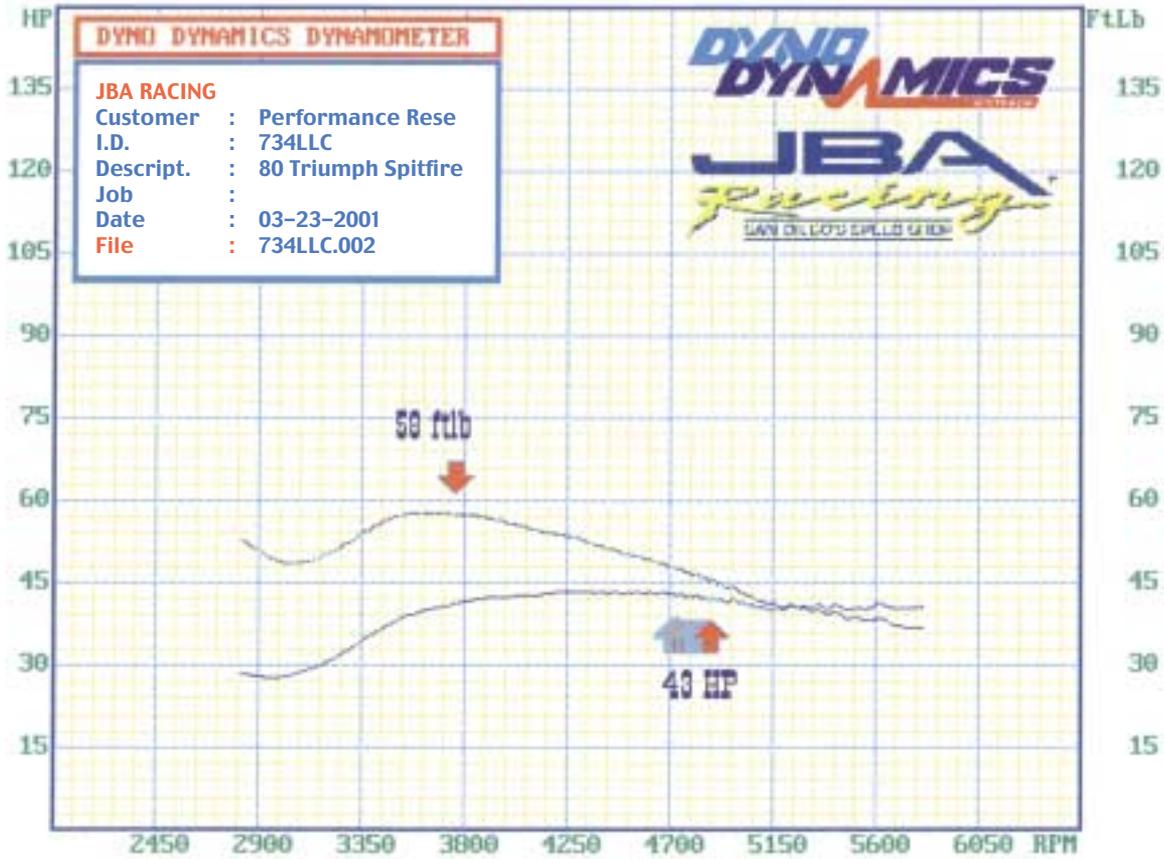
The Seattle car is in for a stage two motor, shocks, big brakes, header modification, exhaust system, and a hub kit w/16" wheels. Spitfire and GT6 Magazine hopes to test drive this car afterwards and feature it...with the owners consent of course.

We really wanted to provide a skid pad, quarter mile and 0-60 test between the two as well but time was limited for testing.

Thanks to all the guys at JBA Performance in San Diego CA for performing the tests. ■

car	0-60	max bhp @ rpm	max torque @ rpm	weight	power/weight
Stock 1976 N.A. 1500	15.3**	n/a	n/a	~1773 lbs.*	
Stock 1976 European 1500	11.3	71 @ 5500	82 @ 3000	~1680 lbs.*	36.6 lbs/hp*
1980 "Seattle Spit"	n/a	43 @ 4250	58 @ 3500	~1800 lbs.*	41.8 lbs/hp*
1976 "Surf Spitfire"	n/a	77 @ 5200	83 @ 4000	~1680 lbs.*	21.8 lbs/hp*
Stock 1991 Mazda Miata	8.6	97 @ 6500	83 @ 5500	~2500 lbs.*	25.7 lbs/hp*

\* estimates \*\* Road & Track 6/76



# Fantasies, Facts, Fiction, Formulas

BY TED SCHUMACHER

No, this is not an adult Spitfire site!

**Scenario:** TS Imported Automotive office (it's early spring), phone rings - "Hello, this is Mr. Customer. I just put 3 Webers on my GT6. What else can I do? (TS) - "OK, what else did you do to the engine? (Customer) - "The head has been ported and polished and I have a header". (TS) "Anything else?". (Customer) - "No, that's it."

This, or a version of this, happens daily. What's wrong with the above? Answer: The customer has donated to someone's retirement fund. They have not gotten what they wanted. They only got what they asked for or thought they needed. In most cases, the objective was to get more power. BUT, what is really wanted is more useable power in the range where the car is primarily used.

If all your driving is open road, mid-range power is the primary need. If you mostly autocross the car, bottom end power is the goal. If it's a pure race car, top end power is the target.

Back to the opening scenario. What should have happened? The customer should have been questioned as to what he wanted. There is nothing wrong with 3 webers EXCEPT - notice that nowhere did the customer mention increasing compression and changing the cam. Now we see why he wants more. In it's present state, the engine makes really neat "sucking noises" when you step on the loud pedal. It goes "waauuggghhh" and you feel like you can suck in the little boys playing next door if they get to near the carbs. Unfortunately, in this case that's about all that happens. You have gained some performance but nowhere near the amount the dollars spent should equal.

So what's the point? You have paid for the fantasy, not gotten the fact. This same thing happens with Spitfire engines, wheel and tire changes and suspension mods. Engines - if you don't have compression, all the carb \$\$\$ in the world won't

perform as expected. Compression is how tight you "squeeze" the fuel/air mixture. The tighter it's squeezed, the bigger the bang. Modern engines, say the C5 Corvette, are running high compression even with today's fuel. They can do this because of all the engine management features such as variable timing, detonation sensors, etc. The secret to power is to get the biggest bang you can when the spark plug ignites the fuel mix. Picture two 5 gallon buckets sitting outside. One bucket has 4 gallons of gas but no lid. The other bucket has on 2 gallons of gas but is sitting in the sun with a lid clamped on. Leave them both sit all day. If you throw a lit kitchen match into the bucket with no lid, the match will probably go out when it hits the gas. If you throw the same match into the sealed bucket, you will blow the end off the house. That is compression.

Other fantasies of the opening scenario: "the head has been ported and polished." Good, but only if you have a cam and compression and a fuel system to allow the porting/polishing to do something. "I have a cam." Good, but only if you have something for the cam to do. A wild cam with no compression increase and a single Stromberg carb won't do anything. "The car has big wheels and very low profile tires." That's fine but what did you do with the suspension? For almost 20 years, we had a contract with Goodyear on our race car. I recently spent sometime with their race tire people. One of the things we talked about was the tire acting as a spring. If you don't believe this, watch a NASCAR race. They are actually adjusting the spring rate by changing the tire pressure. These pressure changes are normally in 1/2 psi increments. Very slight but it actually changes the spring rate on that particular corner of the car. The point being, if you decide to use the extremely low profile tires, you have changed the spring rate dramatically. Since there is very little sidewall the springs must be altered to compensate

for this. "I have headers". Good, now what do you think they are doing for you". Headers move exhaust away from the engine and can actually create horsepower at different engine speeds. The header design and engine type - straight 6, V8, will dictate how much power is gained. For example, our TR8 headers show a 10+% power increase on a dyno, even on a stock engine. But, the V8 design is the most responsive to headers. Here we go again, unless you give the something to do, and use the correct design for your application, no benefit. We have a GT6 header listed on our web page. It also says "RACE ONLY". The header is noisy, frame modifications are needed and it rattles. IT ALSO MAKES POWER. Good header for the application but not for a street car.

The title said formulas. Here is the one that is most useful in understanding basic engine performance. Remember we said you need compression to make power. Compression ratio = V1 + V2 divided by V2. V1 is the volume of the cylinder. V2 is the volume above the piston at "top dead center" (this is when the piston is at it's uppermost point of travel). Since the top of the piston is nearly even with the top of the block, V2 is the volume of the combustion chamber plus the volume of the head gasket. Let's say V1 = 450cc's and V2 = 50 cc's. Plug it into the formula and you have 450 + 50 equals 500 divided by 50 = 10:1.

Modifying the our cars is simple and fun. It can yield dramatic results. Just be sure what you want to accomplish or the results can be dramatic to your checkbook and still not do what you want.

Next article we are going to build an engine.

**BIO:** Ted Schumacher has been 30+ years in the British car business. A former Austin-Healey/MG/Triumph dealer, he is now runs TS Imported Automotive, a full-line parts and specialized service business. To contact Ted, call 1-419-384-3022 or visit their web site at [www.tsimportedautomotive.com](http://www.tsimportedautomotive.com) ■

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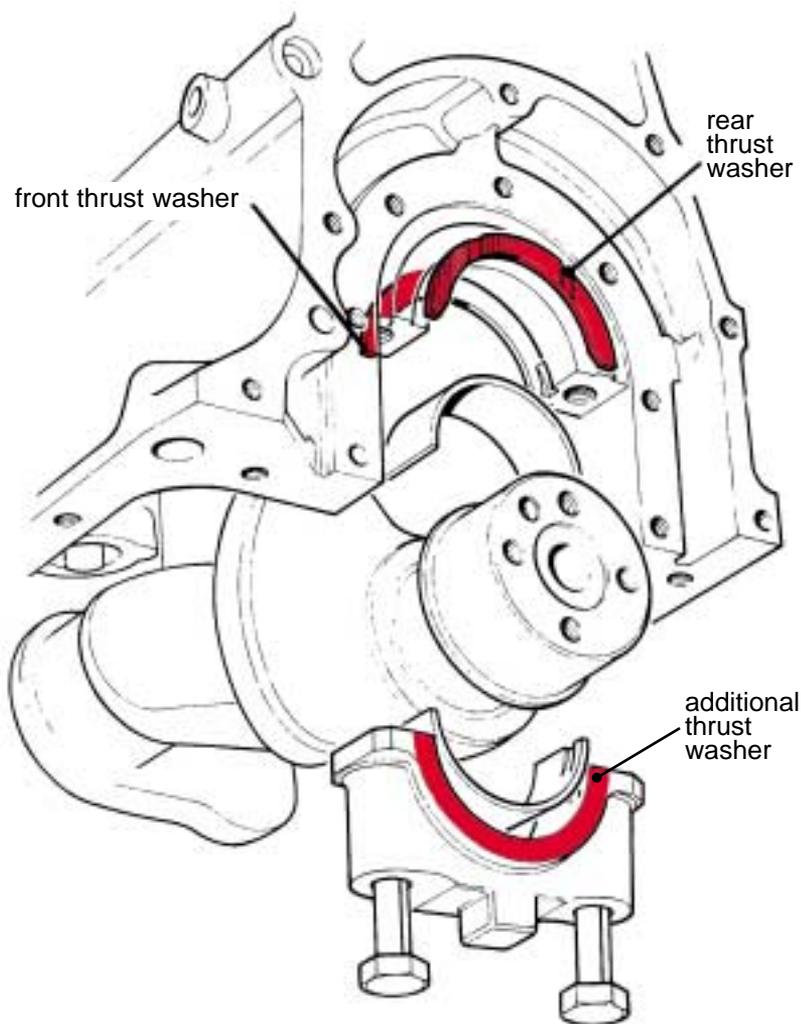
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# Dropped a Washer?

BY FRED GRIFFITHS



The greatest problem with thrust washers in the 1500cc engine is probably the fear of replacing or repairing them! I had known mine were worn, but until they finally fell out, I was afraid to dig into the motor.

This article explains how to replace the thrust washers and also explains how to make a full circular rear thrust washer. It assumes the work is done with the engine still in the vehicle. All normal precautions for working under a car should be observed.

## WHAT ARE THRUST WASHERS?

In case you are wondering, the thrust washers are two semi-circular metal pieces that fit over the crankshaft on either side of the upper half of the rear main crankshaft bearing. They are held up into a groove in the block by the bearing cap, and cannot be seen with the rear bearing cap in place - unless of course they are lying in the bottom of the oil pan! While they are doing their job, they ride against flanges on the crankshaft preventing it from moving forward or backward more than the specified amount. (Figure 1)

The problem is that every time you press the clutch pedal, you push the clutch plate, flywheel and crankshaft forward against the rear thrust washer. Starting the motor with the clutch depressed, or sitting at a stop light with the car in gear and the clutch pedal pushed in causes even greater wear. Eventually the rear washer wears thin. (Figure 2.) When it is thin enough, it slips past the rear bearing cap and drops out of place. Once it is out, the crankshaft can move further forward and the front thrust washer will follow the first into the oil pan. (Figure 3)

Without the rear thrust washer in place, the flange on the crankshaft starts to wear against the bearing cap because it is thicker than the part of the block above it. This may be accidental, or a design feature of Triumph motors so the crankshaft flange can wear into the bearing cap before it wears into the block. Bearing caps are easier to fix than a block.

Pinning the normal rear thrust washer in place is quite common on engine rebuilds. This prevents it from falling out, even when it becomes excessively worn. However, it is imperative that the motor be completely disassembled to allow drilling and pinning. It also requires disassembly to install a new one.

There are different degrees of thrust washer failures. Service manuals quote crankshaft endfloat at .006" to .014" (i.e. 6 to 14 thousandths of

an inch), so it could be said that anything greater than 14 thou is failure.

## REMOVAL

After removing the oil pan and rear main bearing cap, and discovering that the thrust washers are worn but still in place, pry the crankshaft fully forward, then use a small pointed tool or stiff wire to push up on one end of the front washer. It will be easier to remove the front one first because the front flange face of the crankshaft gets less wear. The washer will rotate around the crankshaft and drop out on the floor. Push or pry the crankshaft fully back, and push out the rear washer.

Check the crankshaft flanges for wear. If there is wear, it will be on the rear flange. If it is still smooth with no bits of thrust washer metal seared onto it, all is well.

Slip a new thrust washer into the rear position. Push the crankshaft forward and slip a new washer in the forward position. Washers come in 3 sizes - standard thickness, .005" oversize and .015" oversize (i.e. thicker). Pick a combination of these to allow the crankshaft the specified endfloat. The three washer thicknesses give you six possible combinations of thickness. (It doesn't matter which thickness goes front or rear.)

Checking this endfloat can be done in two ways. The simplest is to push the crankshaft fully forward, and use feeler gauges to determine the space between the front washer and the crankshaft flange. Make sure the washers are up where they will be when the bearing cap is replaced.

The second method involves using a dial gauge clamped to the motor block. With the crankshaft pushed fully back (or forward) set the dial gauge against a bearing journal or counterweight and zero the dial. Push the crankshaft fully

the other way and read the gauge - it should be between the 6 and 14 thousandths of an inch. If it is, the hard work is done.

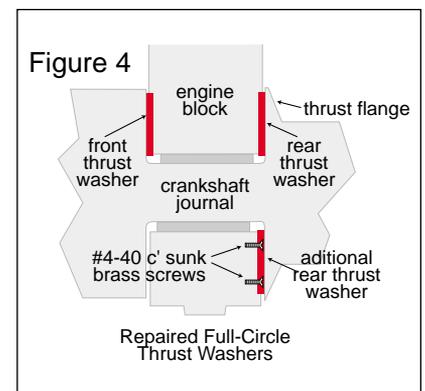
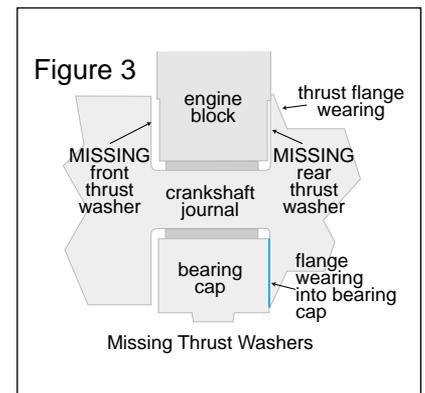
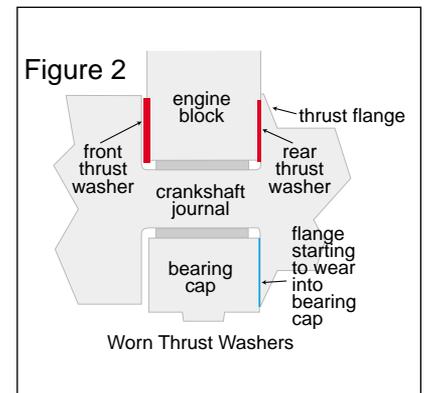
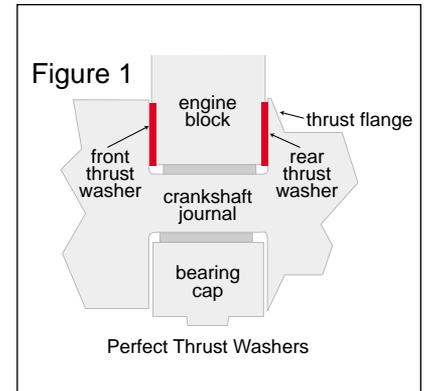
If your thrust washers were worn to the point that they ended up in the oil pan, you may still be lucky. If the crankshaft has worn into the bearing cap, but has not scored the flange itself, the motor may be repairable. If it has worn deeply into the cap, and just started to wear into the block above the crankshaft, but again has not scored the flange, this too may be repairable. If however, it has worn deeply into the block where the thrust washer should sit, or has burnt or scored the flange of the crank - not easily repairable. Although I understand anything is repairable with enough money.

## REBUILDING THE BEARING CAP

This section assumes you have access to a small milling machine or drill press. A lathe would also help.

Remove the bearing shell and inspect the bearing cap. One side, the front, should be flat with original machining marks visible. The rear side may have a lip of metal with original machining marks, just outside the worn area. From this original metal you can determine how much the crankshaft wore into the bearing cap, and how much to rebuild it.

To do this I used a lathe and small milling machine (a drill press may work). Also have on hand a piece of plastic or plywood about 3/4" thick and about 3" square, new thrust washer sets (various oversizes would be best), small brass countersunk machine screws, a tap to match the screw threads, small drill bits, and feeler gauges. (I tried using Plastigage, however I found that I could not force the crankshaft hard enough against the thrust washers to squash the Plastigage - even using a



foot long pry bar!)

First I marked the center of the plastic square and drilled a hole through the center. The size is not important, but needs to be large enough to hold the Lexan in the lathe and later on the milling (or drill press) table, 5/16" should do. I could have used plywood or almost any material, but happened to have Lexan handy. It machines well, and is soft enough not to mark the bearing cap.

The Lexan square is mounted between lock washers on a bolt in the lathe chuck and turned down until it is round and fits perfectly in the semicircular bearing cap. Remove it from the lathe and bolt it down onto the milling table.

Then I laid the bearing cap on the milling table and brought it against the Lexan circle. Directly under the milling bit, position the bearing cap so that when it is rotated by hand around the Lexan circle the bit will mill out the worn area, flat and square. I used a fluted end mill 6mm diameter in the milling chuck. Set the bit to remove several thousandths of an inch with each pass around the bearing cap.

By holding the bearing cap firmly by hand against the Lexan circle and down against the milling table, and by taking only small amounts of steel off with each pass the result will be smooth and accurate. The milling bit cannot bite deeper into the bearing cap but will push it away from the Lexan circle preventing damage to the cap. The advantage of using this technique over bolting the bearing cap to a rotatable milling table, is that it can be removed and replaced after each trial in the motor without a lot of precise realigning.

Adjust the position of the bearing cap (and Lexan circle) so the milling bit makes a recess in the cap exactly equal to the size of a new thrust washer. Do not mill the recess any deeper than necessary to clean up the wear. The recess can be milled deeper later if necessary.

In the meantime, leave the milling machine setup untouched, you will need to use it again.

## A BIT OF THEORY

Triumph motors are fitted with only a semicircular thrust washer. Most other motors are fit-

ted with a full circle thrust washer. And, since a fully circular thrust washer would have less pressure per square inch on it, it would wear more slowly than a semicircular one. Therefore we can machine the bearing cap recess to the exact depth to allow a new thrust washer sitting in there to be in the same plane as the washer recessed in the block above it. This depth cannot be determined mathematically, so must be decided by trial and error.

## TRIAL AND ERROR

Now comes the trial and error and the feeler gauges. (A dial gauge would work easier.) Fit the upper rear washer and push the crankshaft fully forward. Measure the space between crankshaft flange and the block where the front washer would go. You may need to use a steel block plus feeler gauge. Make note of the measurement. Remove the upper rear washer. Lay a new lower washer into the bearing cap, then fit the bearing cap, with its new thrust washer into the block. Tighten the bolts snug, but not torqued. Check the gap left for the front thrust washer again. If the two measurements are identical (not likely!) you are almost ready to reassemble the engine.

If not, you have two possibilities. If the measurement with the upper washer in place was greater than when the lower one was in, try thicker upper washers or thinner lower washers until the measurements are equal. If this is not possible with the washer sets available, try milling the bearing cap more, (see A. below) or grinding the lower washer (see B. below).

If the upper washer gives less clearance, try thinner upper washers, and thicker lower washers. Again, if this is not possible with the washer sets available, try grinding the upper washer (see A. below), or shim the recess in the bearing cap (see C. below).

**A.** To mill only a few thousandths of an inch off the bearing cap, cut a hole the size of the Lexan circle out of a piece of paper and place it on the milling table. Putting the bearing cap on top of the paper will raise the bearing cap a few thou-

sandths of an inch. Mill off the extra metal, lay the washer in the cap and try it in the motor again.

**B.** To make a thrust washer thinner, grind it. Lay a piece of wet and dry emery paper on a hard flat surface. Lay the thrust washer **HARD**, flat side down on the emery (the grooved, soft side is the thrust side - do not grind this side.) Rub the thrust washer in various patterns around on the emery to get even grinding. Check the washer thickness regularly by using a micrometer on at least three places.

**C.** To increase the effective thickness of the bottom thrust washer, place a shim between it and the bearing cap. Cut shims out of shim metal - hard brass or steel. They will be drilled and held firmly between the thrust washer and bearing cap. They are not subjected to wear.

As I said this is the trial and error part. It may take several tries to get the end float correct or even close. If there is a difference of a few thousandths between the top and bottom washers, I wouldn't worry. When one wears down by that amount, then the thrust will be taken by both washers and the wear rate will slow down. Mine have been in a year and show no signs of bad wear yet.

When the clearances are to your satisfaction, lay the new thrust washer in the recess milled in the end cap and mark it in 3 places. Remember the grooved side of the new washer will be out, away from the bearing cap. Don't go by parts manuals and catalogues that show them with the oil grooves against the block! One hole will be near each end, say 3/8" from the tip, and a third will be equally spaced between the first two. It seemed logical to use a known measurement so that when a new thrust washer is to be installed again, it can be drilled precisely from these measurements to fit the holes we will make in the bearing cap. Clamp the washer to the bearing cap so the tips of the washer are flush with the top edges of the cap. Center punch at each mark and drill a tiny pilot hole. Use a centre drill to pre-

vent the bit wandering as will happen with a standard long drill bit.

Making sure the thrust washer does not move, drill the holes through the washer into the bearing cap. Remove the washer and tap the drilled holes to match the machine screws. I used #4-40. On the washer, countersink each hole enough so that the head of the screw is recessed in the washer. In this way, when the washer wears, the screw head will not wear off. You may also have to file the head of the screw down some. Also, by using brass screws, if the washer should wear down, the brass will not harm the crankshaft flange. The final setup should look like Figure 4.

## BEARING CAP REPLACEMENT

For the final refitting of the bearing cap, apply thread lock compound to the screws and assemble the cap and washer for the final time. Fit the main bearing shell into the bearing cap, noting that it goes in the correct way around. Oil the bearing shell and all three thrust washers. Install the bearing cap into the motor as before.

Fit the bearing cap bolts and torque them to the required number - Haynes says 40 ft/lbs. Apply gasket compound to the now clean oil pan and fit a new gasket. Compound the other side of the gasket and refit the pan to the motor.

Add motor oil and start 'er up. Remember - transmission in neutral and foot off the clutch pedal for longer thrust washer life! ■



# Transmission Rebuild (Part 2)

BY GORDON WALKER

In Part 1, in the last issue, I covered the start of a rebuild of an overdrive single rail transmission by explaining how I disassembled the unit, emphasizing the differences in an O/D vs. non-O/D. In this part I will cover the main shaft and re-assembly of the entire unit.

Disassembly of the main shaft is straightforward from the manuals. I found that placing the main shaft vertically in a vice with soft jaws worked well. Getting the 3rd gear circlip off is a little tricky. Don't worry about ruining it, as it needs to be replaced. I placed each part as it came off in order on some inexpensive baking sheets that I use for small parts assembly. They are easy to clean and provide a good, clean workspace. Each part was laid down in order, front to back, and in the same orientation with respect to the parts on either side. In my case, I placed the forward facing direction (bell housing side) of each part face down. The biggest lesson here is to pay attention as you disassemble everything and note how EVERYTHING comes apart, and take your time.

Next I cleaned each piece thoroughly, and checked for damage. I am replacing the reverse gear and 1st/2nd/reverse synchro hub. Most of the teeth were badly rounded off. When ordering parts for the rebuild, check to see whether your gearbox has the scroll type oil seal or the rubber seal. I recommend replacing all gaskets/seals, bearings, circlips, synchro rings and springs as a matter of routine. Replace other parts as needed due to wear.

The first thing to do is to reassemble (without oiling) in the order below, steps A - D, and check end float tolerances for 2nd and 3rd gears as outlined in the manual. Again I had the shaft vertical in a vice. If out of tolerances, you'll need to get new thrust washers. Check this with a new 3rd gear circlip, then throw away and use another NEW circlip for final assembly.

Fit tiny ball bearing into hole on the shaft and thick thrust washer over the ball (The washer has a slot in it).

Place 2nd gear on 2nd gear bush, and fit onto main shaft so that the bush's brim is towards the front of the shaft.

Fit third gear bush, put next washer in place upside down (backwards) and check all end floats with a NEW third gear circlip.

Remove all for final assembly

Mark the center and outer units of both synchro

hub assemblies and, placing in a small box to catch the balls and springs, press the centers out of the synchro hubs. Replace with new detent springs; insert the balls, oil, and press back together lining up the marks. NOTE, the springs are different for the two synchro hubs, so do them one at a time. I really recommend this; I had two broken springs in the hubs.

Place the main shaft in a vice, vertically, front of the shaft up.

Fit 1st/2nd hub onto the shaft. Make sure the fork slot is to the rear of the shaft (down). Place 2nd gear synchro ring into the hub.

Fit tiny ball bearing into the hole on the shaft and the thick thrust washer over the ball (the washer has a slot in it).

Place 2nd gear on 2nd gear bush, and fit onto main shaft so that the bush's brim towards the front of the shaft (up). Generously oil all these parts as you assemble each of them.

Fit third gear bush (oil in and out), then fit third gear and next the washer (right way up!) and a NEW circlip. Never use this clip more than once.

Invert the shaft in the vice, so the front of the shaft is down, and place the first gear split collars on the main shaft. Hold them in place with grease.

Slide first gear synchro ring into the hub and then fit 1st gear. Follow that with the thrust washer.

I used the Haynes tip at this point and tied the cluster together with wire and set aside.

Fit needle rollers to inside of laygear holding them in place with gear oil and a dummy layshaft only (plastic/wood/metal). A NOTE from John Kipping: "Grease, as recommended in the manuals, leads to needle roller failure as they effectively run dry, been there, done that." I removed the 2 outer needle roller retaining rings, stood the laygear on end and placed the dummy shaft in. I could then insert the roller pins around the dummy shaft. Then I tapped the retaining ring back in place, turned the unit over (DON'T let the dummy shaft fall out!) and repeated.

Hold laygear thrust washers in place in the gear case with grease, tags in slots, larger one to the front, and drop layshaft into the bottom of the case. Drop reverse idler gear into the bottom of the case. Place the case in something stable, upright. I used a Workmate bench.

On the main shaft: fit 3rd gear synchro and 3rd/4th hub with the center extension facing

towards the front. Going through the top of the gear case, fit this assembly through the rear bearing hole in the back of the box leading with the rear of the main shaft.

Install the reverse lever.

Place the outer circlip on the bearing and slide the bearing down the main shaft.

Since this is an overdrive unit being rebuilt, I found a trick, after several attempts, to setting the main bearing on the shaft. Using the replaced (old) bearing to tap against, and holding the main gear cluster solidly, tap the bearing into the casing until the circlip rests against the case, then remove the old bearing from the shaft.

Next, mount the O/D adapter plate to the rear of the case. The adapter plate rests firmly against the bearing. Turn the transmission case onto its rear end, allowing the adapter plate to support it. You'll need a vise or Workmate bench to allow the main shaft to pass through. DON'T forget to support 1st gear, so the collars don't fall out.

Now for the hard part....With the main shaft vertical, carefully tap (I used a 2 pound mallet) through the front bearing hole onto the main shaft tip, pushing the main shaft into the bearing. BUT you really need to hold the first gear UP so that the split collars don't fall out of place (Been there, did that...once; & watch your fingers!). The hammering note changes when the assembly is fully home. Another thing to watch is that the 3rd/4th hub center and outer ring may try to separate themselves, sending the springs and balls into the case. With each tap, check it. If the springs and balls fall out, take it all apart again (Been there, did that...twice!).

On the input shaft, fit the oil flinger plate and front bearing and outer bearing clip. Place the gear case right side up. Put small tip bearing ring on main shaft and then the cage bearing, drop big ring into the input shaft, oil both, put 4th synchro ring onto input shaft. Now tap the input shaft assembly into place in the case. Make sure the prongs on the synchro ring go into the hub.

Check to make sure all the gears spin separately, both gear change (synchro) hubs slide and synchro rings are slightly loose. If not you have done something wrong, go back and check everything. Remove the O/D adapter plate. Turn the whole gearbox assembly upside down, and by rotating both shafts you should be able to line up the laygear with the gears and its thrust washers with your little fingers, slide layshaft with pin fitted in from the rear of the box, pushing the dummy layshaft out of the front. Oil as you go. This was much easier than I imagined.

Turn the case over, and fit the washer and a

new circlip to hold rear main bearing in place. Fit the washer and new circlip (or no washer and star clip for gearboxes fitted with a rubber oil seal in the bell housing) to the input shaft.

Install the reverse spindle and gear, teeth to the rear. Make sure the reverse lever engages the reverse gear lever chase.

Drop gear change forks into place, but do not set in the shaft yet.

Maneuver the selector rail into place making sure the knuckle is the correct way round, fit and tighten square headed locating bolt into knuckle. Now insert the gear change fork shaft, lifting forks to mesh with the selector rail, oil as you go.

Replace the reverse gear (idler) spacer, and fit overdrive adapter plate with new gasket (check that the interlock spring and plunger are in place for the selector rail) to the rear of the casing, making sure layshaft locating pin is pointing downwards. This takes a little patience to line all the shafts up.

Fit pin into the front of gear change rail poking through front of casing; place the interlocking spool plate in place over the top in the recesses and fit aluminum top with new gasket.

Fit the o/d woodruff key, cam and clip to the center section of the main shaft outside the gear case. Place new gasket to O/D and mount the O/D to the adapter plate.

Finally fit shifter housing to the top of the overdrive with the rail going into the Transmission cover and into the gear change rail knuckle, and don't forget to tighten the square headed bolt. I would also change the O-ring for the external selector rail located in the cover.

Check gear change action, CAREFULL not to pop the input shaft out of the front of the box if checking 4th gear. If you do, you'll likely separate the hub assemble and the springs and balls will pop out. Fit the gasket and small tin top to the cover. Place the laygear tension springs (3) in the front of the gear case in place, fit a new gasket and mount the bell housing (Don't forget the copper washer on the lower bolt!)

Reinstall the clutch lever, bearing, etc.

Whew! Job done!

While you have the O/D off, it is a good time to replace the rear oil seal, check the O/D filter, and replace O-rings and gaskets on the speedometer gear shaft and angle drive. Also, check the clutch and release bearing, before mating the trans to the engine. Don't forget to refill the Transmission with oil!

I would like to give credit for advice and tips I received from John Kipping on figuring out the process. He was a great help when I got stuck. ■

# Detailing Your Spitfire or GT6

BY SUSAN HENSLEY



It's springtime again and time to get your car out of the garage and back on the open road! The trees are budding, the birds are singing, and that driving itch is upon you. So you wheel your baby out onto the driveway and grimace at the condition you left it in from last year — you meant to wash and wax it before you put it away but there were just so many other things to do. And you would be embarrassed to be seen in it in this condition!

Don't worry! Here are a few simple tips to keep your Spitfire or GT6 looking great!

## WASHING

Get your supplies ready — a bucket, a soft clean cloth or sponge, a soft brush for wheels if necessary, your hose, and car wash soap. Make sure your car is in a shady place, since direct sun will dry soap on a car quickly.

NEVER use dish soap on any car — dish soap is formulated to cut through grease and oils and can damage and dry out your paint job, making it more susceptible to oxidation and dulling. Be sure to use a wash specifically made for cars. I usually use Zip Wax Car Wash or a similar product.

Run some water in your bucket and put the soap in when the bucket is about 2/3 full. Spray the water in to make some good suds as you finish filling the bucket. Wet the car down and run the spray dip inside the wheel wells to start loosening dirt

thrown there by the tires. Wash one section of your car at a time, beginning with the top. It is good to wash your convertible top, but be careful of leaks — don't spray water directly around the windows or up under the edges. Rinse each section as you finish it. If you let the soap dry on the car, it can cause streaks. Be sure to wash behind bumpers and license plates and places that dirt can build up. On early Spits and GT6's try to wash inside the chrome bumperettes, since dirt and water that collects there can rust through from the inside. Keep dunking the cloth in the bucket to remove any dirt you may have gotten on the cloth — it can scratch your paint if you are not careful.

Wash the tires and wheels last, since they tend to get more dirt on them. Spray them down well and wash all crevices, using the soft brush if necessary. Spray the wheel wells again to remove the loosened dirt. Also spray under the car making sure to get the back side of the wheels, the suspension, and where the wheels would throw road dirt up on the underside of the body and chassis. Be sure to do this each time you take your car out if you drive where the roads have been recently salted to avoid rust forming on your chassis.

I like to wash inside my bonnet as well, since it collects a lot of road dirt and grime. Open the bonnet and spray with water, then wash and rinse. If there is greasy dirt, use Simple Green or some other paint-safe degreaser FIRST and let it soak, then spray down, wash and rinse.

When you have finished the outside of the car, take your damp cloth and clean the inner door sills and inside the trunk edges and other places where dirt and water may get into. Be sure to rinse your cloth out often as you do this — these places are usually ignored by most people and can get quite dirty. Clean the door and trunk seal gaskets as well to ensure a good fit.

## DRYING

I highly recommend using a chamois to make sure you don't have water spots on your nice clean car. It does a great job of absorbing water. If you have hard water in your area, water spots can be the dickens to get off your windows!

Wet the chamois and wring it out thoroughly. Start drying the car from the top, wringing out the chamois as soon as it starts leaving water tracks behind. Dry the windows and then the rest of the paint and chrome. Do not use it on your wheels unless you do it carefully; the tires can mark it and the wheels can possibly leave dirt on it as well. Rinse it well afterward and hang it to air dry.

## WAXING/POLISHING

Waxes and polishes have two distinct uses and are NOT interchangeable. A wax is designed to protect your paint with UV protection and emollients. It coats the paint with a finish that leaves a shine and protects the paint layer underneath. A car should be waxed when the water no longer beads up on the paint job.

A polish imparts a beautiful shine to your car but does not protect the paint. I personally do not use polish unless I am getting my Spit ready for a show. It can be used between waxes to heighten the shine of your finish.

As your car gets older road dirt, repeated washings and wear can scratch and haze the paint, and the sun can oxidize it, creating a whitish coat on top of the paint. There are several different products that can be used to counteract these effects. For fine scratches you can use a wax like Kit Wax that removes fine scratches. These waxes clean and fill the scratches or may buff the top layer out a little bit. For deeper scratches you will need a buffing compound, which actually has a mild abrasive in it. This will remove the top layer of scratched paint, and you need to wax afterward since your paint will be vulnerable. For a bad paint job that REALLY needs help you can use rubbing compound, which is basically sandpaper in paste form. This scrubs the top layer of paint away quickly, and you will need to finish it out with buffing compound, then wax. Be VERY careful when using these products; too much enthusiasm and you will cut through to the primer. For oxidation (red and black non-clear-coated cars are most prone to this) a great product is ColorBack by Turtle Wax. It removes haze and imparts a great shine, and you don't have to wax afterward.

When waxing, be sure the car is out of the direct sunlight, is relatively cool to the touch, and is completely dry. Read the directions for whatever product you choose to use and follow them explicitly. When using these products, be sure to rub in

overlapping circles and buff off in the same manner, turning your buffing cloth constantly. Be careful when using an electrical buffer since it can burn your paint if used improperly. Use a soft toothbrush to clean the excess wax out of cracks, trim and gasket edges when done.

## DETAILING

I use ArmorAll for shiny black tires, but there are a lot of products on the market that achieve the same effect. I use a foam applicator I found at Wal-Mart that is curved to fit the sidewall of the tire so I don't spray product on my wheels and paint. If you choose to spray, if you do it before you wax, the wax job will remove overspray from the car body. Clean overspray from your wheels before driving, since it collects dirt and brake dust very quickly.

Protectants such as ArmorAll can also be used for rubber and plastic trim to protect and shine, but be careful using it on the top of your dashboard — it reflects in your windshield! That can be quite annoying.

I use ArmorAll for my vinyl convertible top but different people have different ideas about what to use. Suffice it to say that most products that clean and protect vinyl will be at least adequate for the job. For a canvas top I have found that a brush similar to a shoe brush works to brush away dirt. If a canvas top gets stained with something that won't just brush away, a foaming carpet cleaner like Woolite works well. Follow the directions carefully.

I also use a product called Black Chrome for the black plastic-like trim on my Honda — it cleans and renews the trim so it looks black again and not whitish. It is good for rubber bumper covers as well.

## GLASS

I swear by a product called RainX! Use this once and you will never go back. It causes water to sheet off of your windows and windshield and you don't have to use your wipers as much. After you wash and dry your car, rub it on with a damp cloth, let it dry, then wipe it with a clean damp cloth and buff with a dry soft cloth. It's great!

I do not recommend using Windex on the outside of your windshield, since it can rainbow and detract from your vision. Car wash soap and drying with a chamois should be fine, with RainX afterward if you like.

*Coming in the next issue:* How to clean and detail the interior of your car and how and why to clean your engine. ■

# How to Make Your Own Set of Car Dollies

BY BOB SPRUCK

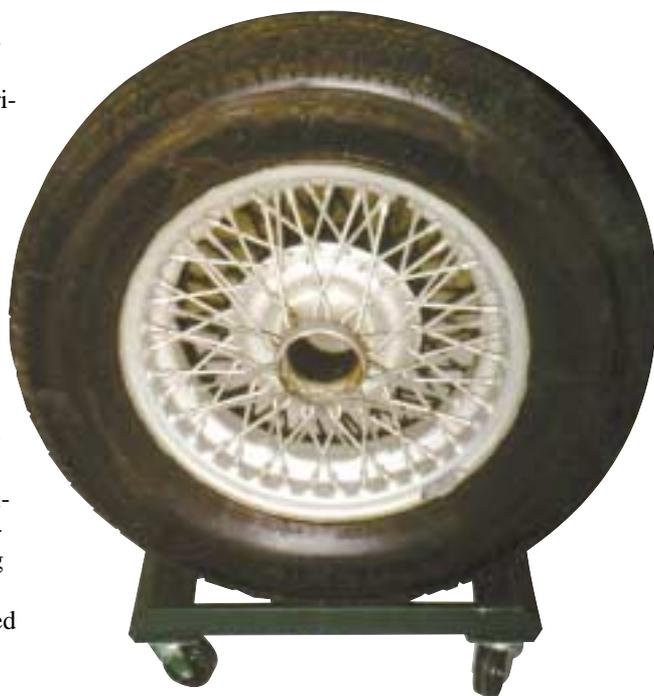


I'm the kind of guy who just hates to pay to have something done that I can do myself. Whether its yard work, household projects, or, especially, something on my LBC's. In my garage, I have two Midgets, a 1972 currently up on blocks in the garage undergoing an engine rebuild and a 1967 vintage racecar. The rebuild on the '72 was started three years ago and has been delayed by the never-ending tasks on the racecar taking priority on my time and money. Since I work on the racecar most of my free time but want to be able to resume work on the '72 when I occasionally find some motivation, I need to keep both of them in the garage and accessible. In order to keep peace in the family, I also need to keep my wife's mini-van there, too. So, her van resides on her side and both of my MGs reside close together on my side. Even though the garage is large, in order to have room to work around both of the MGs and still get to my workbench, compressor, drill press, storage cabinets and all the other "stuff", I park the MGs perpendicular to the normal direction. That poses no problems until I need to move the racecar to go racing or to gain space to work on the '72. Ever since I installed the welded 4.22 differential and increased the turning radius to what seems like 50 feet, it

has been impossible to get the racecar out of its slot without a lot of effort.

I always thought that the car dollies I saw advertised in the car magazines were a great idea, but I didn't want to spend \$160 on something that didn't either make my cars go faster or look better. Plus, I figured "Why should I pay that much money when I surely could make those things myself". My racing partner, Bob Van Kirk, had the same problem. Two guys as intelligent as us surely could come up with a design for something as simple as a car dolly. That's why we are such good partners – our combined talents devised a simple solution to an even simpler problem. Did I say we were both also charter members of the "We Tight Club?"

The initial problem was finding the raw materials to make eight devices inexpensively. Bob came upon the idea that made the project possible. The raw material source was something most of us have around the house going unused, waiting for the day to become part of some ingenious project.



Bed frames!! Over the years that two bed frames took up space in our garage attic, my wife heard them referred to as: they're too good to throw out, some day I might be able to use them, that kind of stuff is hard to get, I'll think of something to do with them, and they're not taking up any space, dear!

Once the raw material was found, we began the design and fabrication phase. The dolly is essentially nothing more than a square frame of angle iron with casters at each corner. The bed frame I used had angle iron of two different dimensions. I used the 1" by 1" size for the longitudinal pieces that run parallel to the length of the car and 1 3/8" by 1" angle for the cross or transverse pieces that run perpendicular to the length of the car. I laid out the uncut angle iron on the garage floor around a loose tire in order to determine the correct length of the longitudinal pieces and the cross pieces. I positioned the longer leg of the cross piece angle iron against the tire surface in order to provide more metal contacting the tire. The spacing of the cross pieces determines the length of the longitudinal pieces. The width of the tire plus an extra inch clearance on each side of the tire determines the length of the cross pieces. There is nothing to be gained by making these pieces too short. Use up all the angle iron you have. After all, you don't want pieces left over that you have to store again. The larger the "hole" the less precise you need to be when dropping the car off the jack into the dolly. However, if the "hole" is too large, the tire will touch the ground before it contacts the crosspieces. This is why I moved all the loose uncut pieces around on the garage floor with a tire between them before I came up with my final dimensions. I decided 15" for the longitudinal pieces and 11" for the crosspieces would be perfect for my 13" race tires and "garage" tires.

Cutting the angle iron to size was another story. I assumed the metal would be pretty soft and easy to cut. After all, they give these things away so they must be made from cheap (soft) metal. Wrong! I ruined two hacksaw blades and an air powered cutoff wheel and barely made a nick. I had to drag out the big stuff, a cut-off blade on my circular saw. That did the trick. I recommend that you do the cutting out doors, as there is a lot of fine metal dust created with each cut and you're going to make a lot of cuts. Since it was so easy to cut once I got set up, I cut the corners off the cross pieces so they didn't interfere with the radius on the inside of the angle on the longitudinal pieces. I

also cut off the little triangle left on the ends of the longitudinal pieces outboard of where the cross pieces joined them. I welded all the joints, but you could use nuts and bolts if you don't have a welder. In either case, make sure all the joints are square, clamp them in place to retain the squareness, and weld or fasten all the adjoining edges.

The local home improvement store was the source of the swivel casters. The important attributes here are that they carry the load and roll and swivel easily. Since I know my race-car weighs slightly over 1500 pounds, I chose swivel casters of 125 pounds capacity and a 2" diameter wheel. They cost about \$2 each. This provided for 500 pounds capacity at each corner and 2000 pounds overall, which I felt was sufficient for either one of my Midgets. Welding the caster plates to the underside of the square frame at the very corners is all it takes. Again, if you aren't welding the frames, the casters could be attached with nuts and bolts. Finish the project by cleaning the surfaces with a wire wheel and using up that half empty can of spray paint you've been saving.

When I saw how well the dollies moved and worked with the weight of the car on them, I came up with another brainstorm. I cut some scrap 2x6 boards so they fit inside the dollies on the angle flanges. Now I can use one to move around such heavy items as engines, transmissions, and rear ends. But the best part is how well they working their intended use under a car. You can turn a car in its own length. You can move a car around any way you want in your crowded garage with a minimum of effort. But remember, what you now have is a car with four wheel steering, so it is easier to maneuver the car to where you want it if you have another person on the other end. My wife is glad to help when I call her because she realizes how easy it is now to push, pull, and steer a heavy car, in close quarters, and not over exert yourself. ■



# Homemade Hub Puller

BY MIKE ROSS

I couldn't part with \$95.00 to buy a Triumph Hub Puller, so I made my own out of stuff laying around in my garage. Here are the steps.

I had an inexpensive two prong gear puller that you can buy from any hardware or autoparts store. This one had the two cast steel clawed prongs bolted to two pair of thin metal plates which in turn were bolted to the main part of the puller (figure 1). I unbolted the two prongs.

Then I drilled two holes in two 2" x 4" x 1/8" mild steel plates. The holes lined up with the rear wheel studs so the steel plates could easily slip over the studs and rest on the rear brake drum face (figure 2) making sure that they didn't cover the rear axle shaft end.

I used the lug nuts to bolt the two steel plates to the brake drum. Next, the hub puller was carefully positioned over the end of the rear axle shaft in the center of the brake drum (figure 3), and the two pairs of metal plates on the gear puller were welded to the steel plates bolted to

the brake drum.

A 1/2" socket wrench easily turned the gear puller shaft and extracted the rear hub. ■

Figure 1



Unbolt and remove the prongs

Figure 2

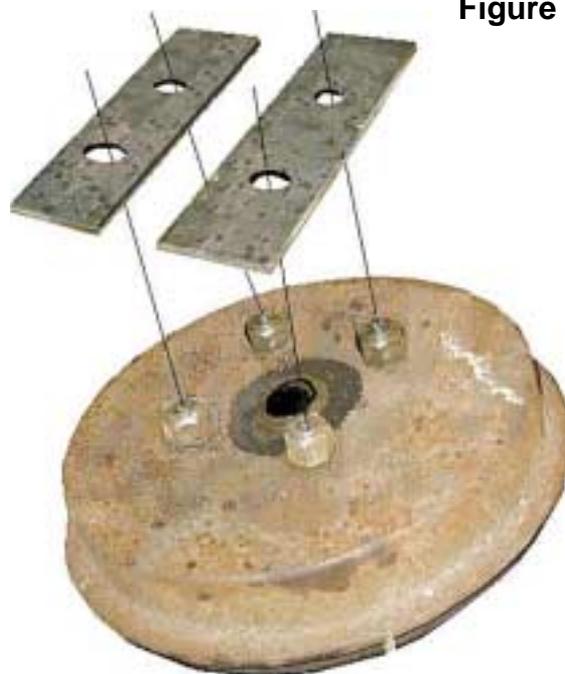
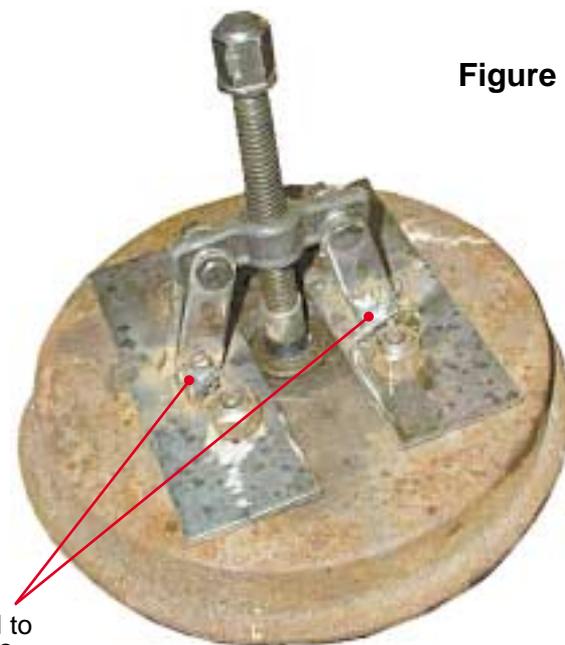
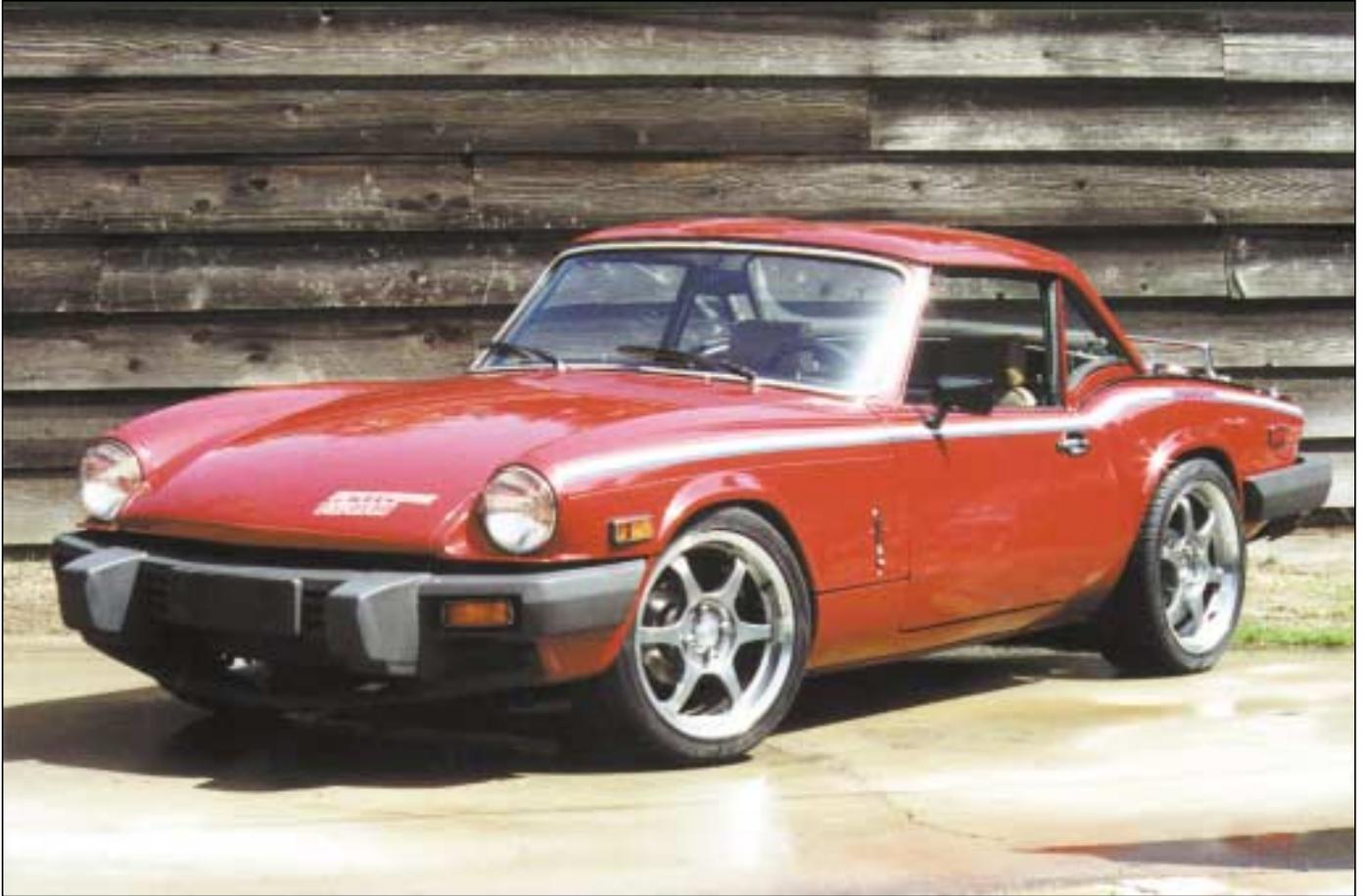


Figure 3



Weld to plates



# So You Want Cool Wheels Do You?

BY CHRIS CANCELLI

There are a number of reasons why after market wheel companies do not fit the Spitfire or GT6. Realistically there is no other car that deserves them more than the Spitfire with its countless SCCA titles throughout the past 4 decades. But the truth of it is these very small cars were designed with very small hubs (wheel mounting platforms) to match. Plagued with the very small P.D.S. or bolt circle of only 3.75 inches, limits the spectrum for the increased side loads that are needed for taller wheels during cornering. The studs or wheel lugs if you will, are also under sized for the task. In addition, (yes, there is more) these cars would require staggering

the wheel's offsets or dish from front to rear in order to be fitted correctly, which then makes tire rotation impossible. And we won't even get into the manufacturing, marketing, and projected sales end of it. So tall wheels and low profile tires may never find their way to the Spitfire or GT6, right?

WRONG Ricky racer! One company's theory is, if they won't make the wheels fit the car, then make the car fit the wheels!

Performance Research Industries, a San Diego CA company that most of our readers should be well familiar with by now, has done it! P.R.I. has come up with a solution for those who



have the desire to personalize their cars with custom wheels, but more importantly give all who own these cars the opportunity to install much higher quality tires than ever before increasing grip, stability, handling, and safety dramatically.

Since it is the Japanese car market the wheel companies mostly target, P.R.I. has developed all new replacement front hubs along with rear wheel adapters that use the same bolt circle found on many Japanese cars today. Installing their hub kit will link you to the entire custom wheel market, enabling you to shop for those very cool wheel/tire packages you see advertised in all the car magazines, just as if you were shopping for a Honda, BMW, or Mercedes Benz! Installing a 16 inch wheel/tire package on a Spitfire of GT6 would be what 19 inch wheels are to a BMW. You will also be able to take full advantage of the latest technologies offered by the leading tire manufactures whether your desires are for safety, spirited driving, or both! The kit also equalizes the axle widths from front to rear so wheel offsets can be matched making tire rotation possible. The kit also improves the handling of the car by widening the rear track by a full 12 inches. This gives the car a wider stance at the rear improving

stability and cornering capabilities above and beyond what the wheels and tires themselves will do.

The P.R.I. hub kits are machined from a billet aluminum most commonly used by the aerospace industry, so durability is not a problem.

The facts are, P.R.I. hub kits are not only stronger than Triumph's original units, but are 2 lb's lighter as well. (An un-sprung weight advantage)

The wheel studs have also been increased to 1/2 inch compared to the cars original 3/8". The studs are also fine thread and heat treated for added strength. Spitfire owners will continue to benefit through this kit from the upgraded spindles and larger outer wheel bearings, which are also ideal for handling the additional weight of a V6 or V8 engine swap. The replacement spindles are made from a superior metal known throughout the aircraft industry as ETD 150. This high quality solid bar material is heat treated to raise its hardening level, doubling that of the Spitfire's stock spindles. Rounding out this major improvement kit are top shelf hub seals and wheel bearing adjustment nuts.

The adjustment nuts are by Mercedes Benz. P.R.I. has adapted these neat parts for their precise adjustment characteristics and to eliminate the archaic cotter pin castle nut combination. P.R.I. has also nixed the felt swipe seals for the more favorable rubber lip seals used on all cars today. Sound overkill? Your right! This company's goal is not only to elaborate on the performance of the Spitfire and GT6, but to also make them safer to drive! As with BMW or Mercedes Benz, quality, performance, and safety are not without compromise. The hub kit from Performance Research Industries will cost the GT6 owner \$599.00 and the Spitfire owner \$799.00 with the additional upgraded spindles. And of course, wheels and tires not included.

For more information contact Chris at (619) 286-1566 or [info@prirace.com](mailto:info@prirace.com) ■



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PRI hubs and adapters are machined from aero space Billet aluminium with .5 inch wheel studs.



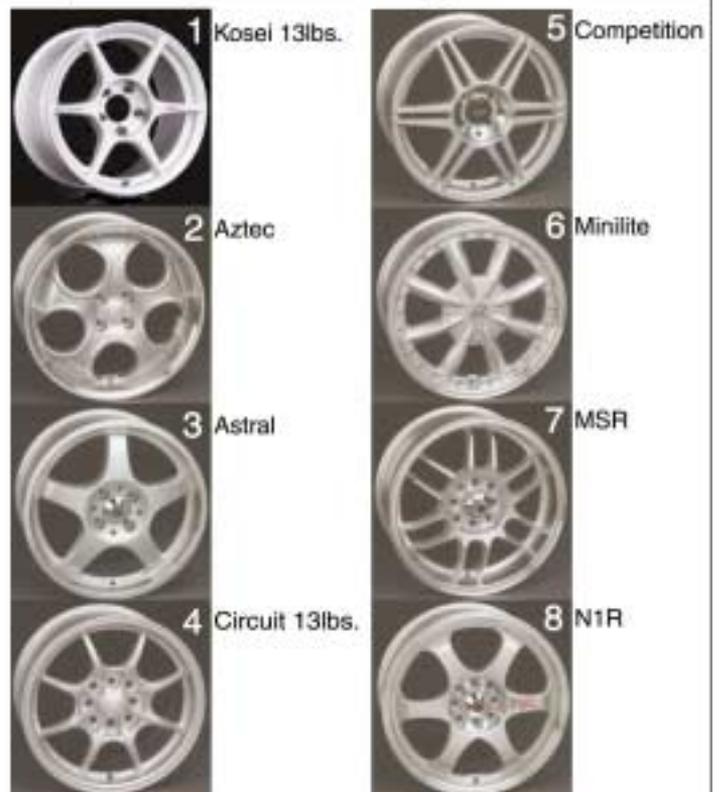
**16" WHEELS ON YOUR SPITFIRE !!**

PRI hubs and adapters make it possible to mount ANY 16" wheels to your Spitfire or GT6 (40mm offset required).

Spitfire 1500 with Mikuni Flat Slide Carburetors



Mikuni and Keihin Carburetors out perform Weber side drafts by 50% in power and gas mileage. This is the most potent single bolt on accessory you can install !



For the Fun of it!

# Your Garages



## Mike Ross, Ohio USA

"Last fall I built a new garage just for my hobby... Spitfires and GT6's! My wife went along with this since I explained to her that it would keep me out of the bars, and she always knows where I'll be. The garage is 52'x30'. It has 4 overhead doors in front, and one on the side for my garden tractor. I have an electric/hydraulic lift, two propane heaters, hot and cold running water and a 4' wide enclosed stairway to the 48'x13' attic to storage for my Triumph parts. I'm presently plumbing it for my air compressor. This is truly my playhouse. I have a "TRIUMPH SERVICE" sign on the front of the garage, until she makes me remove it."



Fred & Wendy Griffiths, Alberta, Canada



## Bill Hopper, California USA

My garage is by no means the best and I am comforted to know that it is not the worst it is however a little different than most. My 2-bay garage has been slightly modified to accommodate both my 1972 Triumph GT6 and my 17-foot Boston Whaler. To fit the boat in the garage I have created a 30" x 52" opening in the back wall as well as a 15" x 10" notch out of the garage door.



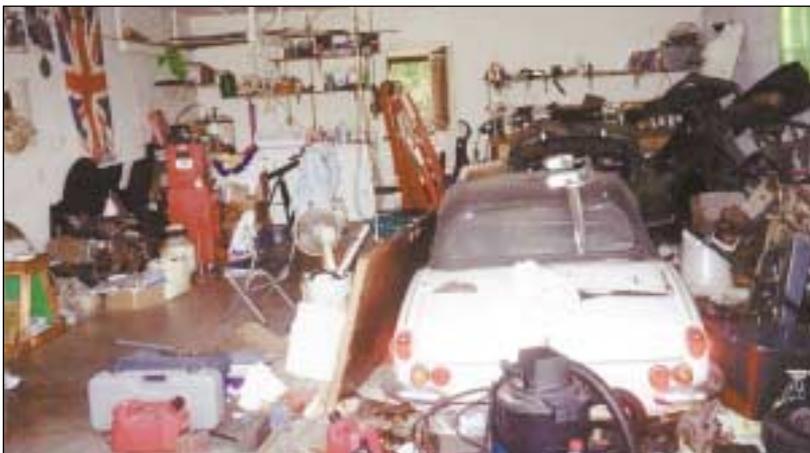
Clyde Johnson, West Virginia, USA



Malcolm Bird, Ontario Canada



John Goethert, Tennessee, USA



Bob Menzies, Florida, USA



**Karl Harris, New Hampshire USA**  
"Couldn't talk the wife into parking in the snow so I could put my baby in the garage, didn't like the prices of the pre-fab shelters, so I cobbled one up on my own for about \$100. Thought I'd send some pics of my "garage," a pseudo-quonset hut made from 1/2" EMT and EMT wall clips, some plastic-coated wire and turnbuckles, and two big tarps. This will serve not only as weather-shelter, but also as a sand-blasting and paint booth. Shortcomings: had to add 2x4 bracing to combat the New England snowfall, as the center top spar was sagging horribly after a moderate snowstorm (EMT bracing since added to front bay, very successful, will be added to others in the spring.) Need to use one big tarp, rather than two smaller ones. Lights would be nice."

## Next Issue:

We are wondering what the one thing that you did to your Spitfire or GT6 that made the biggest difference to driveability, handing, performance, reliability, etc. Send it to [info@triumphspitfire.com](mailto:info@triumphspitfire.com) or P.O. Box 30806 Knoxville, Tennessee 37930



Photos by Robert Harrington Photography

# Vintage Sportscar Racing-What is It?

**BY BOB SPRUCK**

Triumphs are sportscars, original sportscars. Since the sixties and seventies when our cars were new, there have been many other cars which have been called sportscars, but which did not have quite the same characteristics as the cars originally called by that name. No matter how you define the term, cars like the Spitfires and GT6's were and are sportscars. The "sports" in sportscar meant that these cars excelled in competitive sporting events such as rallies, hill climbs, autocrosses, and road racing, both amateur and professional.

Racing these cars at the time they were new was just called racing, and the cars were not yet referred to as vintage. Road racing, conducted in the United States since the late forties by the Sports Car Club of America (SCCA), has changed significantly over the years and the cars have been allowed to keep pace with technology. This has resulted in the old cars being equipped with modern accoutrements such as fiberglass fenders and panels, air dams and wings, heavily modified suspensions, state-of-the-art tires and wheels, and extreme engine modifications. These so-called "production" sportscars are still being raced in the SCCA Club Racing series with all these non-original items. As the cars evolved beyond their original configurations, so did the style of racing. It was less about having fun and more about winning. Regional and national championships are now at stake. Sponsorship is almost a necessity in order to pay for the expensive, high-tech equipment. The

competition is cutthroat and intense. Win at all costs has become the mantra for many of the drivers because big money, industry reputations, and business interests are now involved.

Many of the people who remembered the way these sportscars were raced when they were new, preferred the level of car preparation and the style of racing of that era. So, in the late eighties, "vintage" racing became very popular. This enabled those proponents of the old days to prepare cars or resurrect cars that had sat dormant since that era, equip them as they were equipped back then, and race them in the manner they were raced at that time. Early vintage racing took on a completely different personality than club racing. The emphasis in the vintage racing organizations of today is to prepare and race the cars now as they were then. The SCCA's GCR (General Competition Rules) and PCS (Production Car Specifications) are usually the standards that are used to define the extent and nature of the safety equipment and mechanical pieces allowed in the preparation of the cars. The rules for the style of racing, however, are not found in a book, but exist in the by-laws of each vintage race-sanctioning group. Some of the rules are universally recognized and others are unique to a given group. The unwritten and confusing aspect of the few dozen vintage racing groups in the US is that each group interprets and enforces their rules differently. Some vintage racing groups only allow cars that are prepared very closely to the GCR and

the PCS and enforce those specifications quite vigorously. Other groups have a reputation for allowing anything that looks like an old (or even not so old) racecar as long as you pay your entry fee and pass the tech inspection. The result, then is that the vintage racer must find a vintage racing group close to home that matches his particular interests, philosophies, and pocketbook.

From the spectator point of view, vintage racing is mostly about the cars, not the racing. The typical vintage racing spectator comes out to the races in order to see cars of a bygone era racing in the style of that same era. The race spectator usually has an affinity with a specific marque or model. Many of the people who come up to my car in the paddock or on the grid have a big smile on their face and tell me "Yeah, I used to have one of those". Very often, the next comment is delivered with a sad and wistful frown, and is something like: "Man, I wish I hadn't sold it."

Vintage racing is also about having fun. To many vintage racers, fun means working on their own car, driving it, doing all the repairs and maintenance, basking in a considerable amount of self satisfaction and pride, appreciating the comments and looks of envy from the racer wannabes, and reveling in the parties and bench racing with other men and women who share that same definition of fun. Increasingly, many of the racers aren't shade tree operations. At most events, there are numerous big rigs with multiple, priceless racecars. Those guys have fun too, but on a different scale than the shade tree guys.

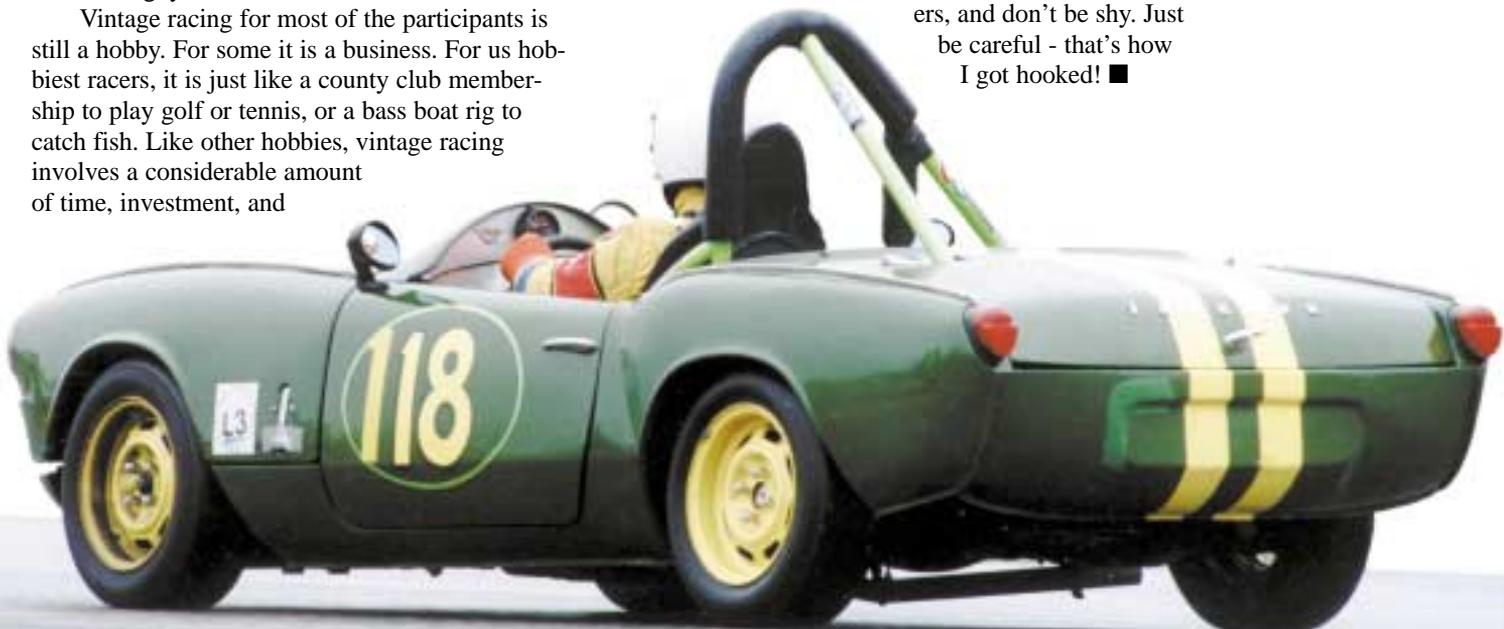
Vintage racing for most of the participants is still a hobby. For some it is a business. For us hobbyist racers, it is just like a county club membership to play golf or tennis, or a bass boat rig to catch fish. Like other hobbies, vintage racing involves a considerable amount of time, investment, and



involvement. Like other hobbies, we can be totally immersed or just have a superficial, part time interest. We can excel at what we do or we can go at it half-heartedly. Many vintage racers have a feeling of responsibility or obligation to perpetuate a past life style, especially when it comes to a car that has racing history. Racing a historic car, say one raced by Mark Donahue, or run in an early Sebring race, or at Watkins Glen enables many current owners to feel that they are the current caretaker of a legacy and are continuing a process that has historical significance.

Vintage racing can be whatever you make it to be. Just make sure you make it fun. This year, find out when a vintage race will be held at your nearest racetrack. Go out and see the cars and the people and the action. Get involved. Talk

to the Spitfire and GT6 drivers, and don't be shy. Just be careful - that's how I got hooked! ■



# Going Fast: It's A Blast!

BY SUE SNYDER



**Here I am with my driving partner, rarin' to go! It takes two to properly tighten the 5-point harness.**

Anyone looking for a really exciting and enjoyable driving experience should consider participating in a class at a competition racing school. In April of this year, I did just that and found the racing class to be informative and challenging, as well as beneficial for street driving and, even more important, autocross.

The class I took was the "Three Day Competition Course" offered by Skip Barber Racing School. This class was one of many offered by the Barber organization, which offers classes throughout the year at several locations around the country, including such raceways as Grattan, Mid-Ohio, Sebring, Road America, and

many more. During the three days of the class, students get plenty of seat time as well as classroom instruction. The only prerequisites for the three-day competition class are a valid driver's license and the ability to operate a non-synchro manual transmission (which is a piece of cake for any British car owner.)

Because of my teaching schedule, I elected to take the race class during Spring Break. The perfect way to escape Michigan's dreary weather by signing up to participate at Moroso Raceway in West Palm Beach, Florida. Well, the weather was very hot and so were the race cars! Racers for this class were Formula Fords with top safe rev

limits of 6000 and top speeds of about 110 mph. For speed addicts like myself, these cars are ideal with no speedometers. Drivers have only three gauges to watch: Tach, Oil Pressure, and Temperature. Each 1G (gravity) car weighs 1000 pounds and produces about 100 bhp. They are the exact same cars driven in the Skip Barber Formula Series races. The car I drove during the class, number 5, had been the winner in a Barber Pro Series race the previous week. These cars will be replaced over the next few months by the Dodge Formula racers with a 2.0 liter 4-cylinder engine.

As I entered the class for the first time, I was a bit apprehensive. Of the sixteen students enrolled, I was the only female! I think some of the guys had a slight problem with that, but oh well, tough noogies! The instructors were patient with all of us as they helped us learn. One of our three instructors was Barry Waddell, who drives in the Barber Pro Series and had just won at Sebring!

Over the three days of class, we were flooded with information and driving practice. Each student learned how to “heel & toe” shift, trail brake, threshold brake, drive the line, and (most important) turn. There’s a whole lot more involved in turning efficiently than meets the eye, and it is the single most important part of successful racing. Each turn on a racing track involves the brake point, turn-in point, apex, track-out and exit speed. Drivers need to identify and utilize each of these points in turning as well as being able to “heel & toe” shift, trail brake and exit the turn at the best possible speed. There are three different types of turn, which influence how a driver can maneuver on the track. Successful turning is probably the most difficult racing skill to learn, but it is also the most satisfying to achieve.

Race drivers also have lots of things to keep track of while racing besides operating the car. In addition to driving the “line”, which is the optimum position on the track for speed and control, each driver must be aware of all the other cars on the course, the condition of their own car, slick spots or other track faults, and the FLAGS! There

are several flag stations around a race course where the flagmen relay information to drivers. There are nine flags, which carry different information: five command flags and four information flags. Finally, there is the weather, which influences every aspect of a race from tires to track condition. Many adjustments have to be made for different weather conditions. In spite of all these different things the driver must keep track of, the more seat time a driver accumulates, the less confusing it becomes.

By the final session of the three-day competition class, we were all driving the Formula Fords at or near their maximum performance and learning how to pass and maneuver around obstacles on the track. Successfully completing the class has earned me a competition license, allowing my entry to drive practice laps and compete in the Barber Amateur Race Series. I’m sure I am not ready for that level of driving, but some practice laps can’t hurt and they are a lot of fun! It certainly won’t hurt my performance in autocross.

All in all, I think the class was well worth the dollars, effort and time. I had a great time and learned a lot about racing, including how physically demanding it is. I have a whole new perspective when watching a race and much more insight into all that is involved. But probably the biggest thrill of all is having turned tight corners at 50 or 60 or even 70 mph with control, and actually understanding how to do it. For as I learned and have since tried to put into practice when on the autocross course, “a chirping tire is a happy tire!” ■



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# A Visit with Bob Tullius

BY BOB MENZIES



Quests can be funny sometimes. They can be long, short, or never ending. They can be meaningful or insignificant. They can be soul wrenching or barely felt. And once in a great while one might even be all of the above, if you are lucky.

I recently had the great pleasure of spending several hours with Bob Tullius at the Group 44 hanger and museum. Warm ups were being run in preparation for the 49th running of the 12 Hours of Sebring, and I was on

Victory Lane, awaiting the arrival of Mr. Tullius. It had taken me some searching to find the right hanger, and I wasn't even sure if he would be there. At the time of his arrival, I was in a discussion with Airport Security about why I was standing by the fence watching the activity on the track. Assuring the officer that I wasn't planning on staying there, but just waiting for Bob Tullius, when we saw him drive up...so I went about my way. Bob was just unlocking the door when I walked up.

I was not prepared for what I was about to enter. Inside was about a dozen beautifully restored or preserved aircraft, all old, all rare. Most military. The T-6 and T-8 were gorgeous. The Waco Texaco bi-plane (one of three made) appeared as though it had just come off the assembly line.

And then there is the P-51 Mustang. Perfectly restored in the colors and insignia of the 4th Fighter Group. In particular the aircraft of a daring pilot who was shot down and killed by friendly fire on a day when he was returning home after shooting down two German planes.





Bob Tullius has two passions in his life today, the planes and his cats. There are several cats living in the offices of the hangar, and they are great cats according to Bob. Bob talked as much about each one and went into great length as he went about his routine feeding and caring for them. And one of his favorite charities, the Highland County FL Humane Society, the recipient of the donation box set up at the museum's door.

Car racing seems to have taken a back seat in Mr. Tullius's life these days. He would rather talk about airplanes, but there is automotive history in every corner of this building. As it should be. The walls are covered with plaques, pictures and awards from Triumph, Jaguar, and British Leyland. Several tables are home to various model cars decked out in Group 44 colors.

And in the hangar are cars worth noting. Several Group 44 Jaguars are resting in the corners after a full life of racing: all of them clean and polished. As is the TR8. And against another wall is the last TR6 ever produced. It was presented to Bob by BL for all of his accomplishments with their cars. BRG with 800 miles. With another TR8 right behind it, with as few miles and in as

great shape.

But when Bob does start talking about the days when Triumphs were his main passion, he recalls those days fondly. And the cars seem to hold a special place in his heart, along with his friends and associates who

drove and worked with the cars. He talked about how much fun the Spitfires were to drive and race. And he reminisced about how great the GT6 was and how all the other teams were surprised by how fast the car was. And in particular, the time he drove the GT6 to victory in Watkins Glenn. It was the first time he was driving after a vicious wreck in Thailand a year before.

Bob Tullius rarely does interviews, and never without a tape recorder in use. But as I was getting ready to leave, he did say one thing that I took as a direct quote.

"Tell everyone who is driving and racing the Spits or GT6's one thing for me. More power to them!" ■



# SPITFIRE SPECIALS

Ball Joint Set (2)	\$40.00	Tappet Set 66-80 (8)	\$30.00
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# Spitfires with No Names

BY ROBERT BEAULIEU

Back in 1979, I switched from racing MGA's to a G-Production Mk II Spitfire thinking of a greater reliability and source suppliers (boy, was I fooled). After a number of excellent years with the vehicle, race wins and championships, the usual Gremlins from racing Aging British Sports Cars (AGSP's) finally started to rear its ugly head.

Two years ago, or should I say from five to two years ago, I suffered the malady of chronic Production car blues and suffered numerous engine complications, blow ups, dnf's, or I was just plain slow.

Commiserating about this with the competition Board Chairman of our Region(New England) one post-race let down, he suggested a possible resolution to these complications. He asked me if I named my cars. I replied in the negative, and he said he could understand the problem. My vehicle was lacking understanding and personality resulting in obvious insecurities (a common trait I believe in most British cars) A proper name would alleviate a number of these ailments immediately.

I got quite a chuckle. Sure, if I name my car, Tom, I won't suffer from any more broken rocker arms... sure, right... But.

Not realizing a serious problem that I have been facing for a least ten years now, it would remedy at least one complication I have always had to explain.

You see, I have now had in my possession three G-Production Spitfires, each with its own history. (please do not question my sanity, we'll hit on that another time). And every time I have to explain something, I precept it with something like this, "...The valve train on the Bob Boig's (the original builder of the car) Spitfire that I ran, always worked..." Well, Bob hasn't driven that car since 1979, So I think it's about time I retired that referral. Instead, I call it the dark blue car. But that doesn't work either because I then painted the car white. Easy, now I can refer to it as the dark blue turned white Spitfire. But I smashed that up on the infamous turn three wall at New Hampshire Inter. Speedway therefore ending that particular Spitfire. Meanwhile in my possession, I have what we can refer to as the Bob Wanta, John Howe, Bruce Phalin Spitfire. (One of those Spitfires that half the Region received its Learner's Permit on!) Unfortunately, I painted that white also, therefore, the complication of having two different white cars destroys that color as a reference tool. So I am back to the long-

winded statement, "...The rear axles came off the Bob Boig dark blue car that I painted white, which then were placed onto the ex-Bruce Phalin car that is also white, but has the green trim..." You can see how much time can be wasted.

To top that off, last winter I picked up another G Spitfire. To ease the pain of another G car, I turned it right around and resold it, but, for instance, I wanted the close ratio box out of it. So now it's the close ratio box out of the orange car, which is now in the white car... but not Bob Boig's ex dark blue car turned white car...But the Spitfire that's white with green trim. And so it goes on, anytime I want to explain anything to crew members, mechanics, the dilemma of going through the identification process can be quite exhausting. Especially since the car I am now driving (the white and green highlighted ex Bob Wanta, John Howe, Bruce Phalin Spitfire with a number of Bob Boigs' racing parts) is definitely a potpourri of all three cars. Actually, I'm now even starting to get confused as to what came from what.

It certainly would be easier just to start all over and call the car "Ralph" wouldn't it. So what comes to mind is a famous (or infamous) threesome to name the three vehicles that have been in my possession—



Huey,  
Dewey,  
Louie...  
Moe,  
Larry,  
Curly...  
Harpo, Chico, Groucho...  
Athos, Porthos and Aramis... I really don't know of any other threesomes.

Yet, I just can't seem to make up my mind. Still, I have not come up with a name... maybe it should be just one, two and three... or A, B and C.

But then again, maybe I should go with a famous foursome—I'm not done yet! ■

# HSR Sprints & Enduro

BY BOB MENZIES



Crossing the finish line at 90 mph!

I have 2 confessions to make. First, it has been 30 some years since I have been able to hang around at a road race event. Second, I tend to get overly excited at times. Now these 2 factors don't seem to be related much, but put them together at Sebring Raceway and the outcome

can become interesting.

March 3rd and 4th, HSR held their Sprints and Enduro races here, and I was able to attend. Several of us with the Triumph Standard Motor Club in Tampa drove down convoy style, along with members of the Suncoast British Car Club of the Sarasota area. We had planned to watch the races, with a parade lap of our cars scheduled between action. As I had never been to Sebring, I was looking forward to this with great enthusiasm, as was my GT6+.

It all started when we were leaving the 1st meeting place, with everyone else driving out, and me passing time getting coffee and chatting with interested onlookers. I pulled out several minutes behind the '57 Vette and the half dozen TR6's that made up our convoy. "Not to worry!", I told Paul, my passenger for the day and fellow TR enthusiast. After all, catching up is half the fun, right?

Boy, did we catch up. Nothing my car likes better than a winding road with cars to catch up to. But we were last. Which was fine for a while. But Paul really wanted to get a picture of the Vette, and I was trying to figure out a way to oblige him, when it happened. A length of straight, with no oncoming traffic. Let it be known that Paul got a very sweet picture of the "Vette framed in my rear view mirror, and when we stopped for gas outside of Sebring, all I heard was "Gosh, Bob, your car sure runs good!"

Pulling onto the speedway was exhilarating. This is Sebring, the stuff of legends! you could hear, smell, and feel the excitement. We had about an hour before our parade lap, so I wandered the paddock, in search of LBC's. There was a Spit on the track at the time, so will have to locate that one later. Did find a Sprite, owned and driven by Brenda Jackson. Asked how it was running, and had a very pleasant conversation with her. Big smile, little car. And she can drive! Watched her do battle with a Mini later that day.

Well, true to form, everyone else pulling out advised me that it was time to get in line for the parade lap! This has got to be a conspiracy! Pulling into line by the track, I was joined in the back by a beautiful Midget, with a Bugeye farther up. And in front was Robin, a fellow club member, with her hubby, Mike, in their TR6. And the ribbing started. Robin, being a racer and great competitor, was telling me I couldn't catch her. And, I being the excitable one, was quietly informing her that I would not only catch, but pass her. Hey, I didn't know the parade lap rules!



So we pulled onto the track behind the Pace car, and I go nuts! This is Sebring, and I am driving on it in my GT6! Paul in the passenger seat, still recovering from the drive over, are blasting down the front straight, setting up for turn #1. No need for braking here, sweet but tricky turn, roaring towards turn #2, a tight left hander, leading into #'s 3 & 4. Under the crossover bridge, down through the sweeping Big Bend, heading full-tilt-boogie into the hairpin. Hard braking, getting to learn the track down the back Fangio Chicane. Turn #10 is a tight right, followed by a sweeping Collier Curve, then Tower Turn, and suddenly blasting towards #'s 14 and 15, long S's, then setting up for 16, Lemans curve. Deceptive here, gotta be cool, halfway through, gun it, and roar down the back straight. Full out, 4th gear, let her rip! Ease off, down shift, pick the line for #17, a tough 180 to the right, watch the wall, then get it down the front stretch. 3.7 miles of history. But wait, all cars are still going! We passed pit road, and coming up fast on turn #1. Cool, we get another lap! Let's push it this time. Remember, I do admit to being excitable.

So this goes on for another lap, getting faster all the time, but thinking that it will come to an end any time now. Coming out of #17 there it is, the dreaded BLACK FLAG! He's pointing at me, not pulling me out. Seems they thought I was going to pass the TR6's. Truth is, I had to really back out of it several times to keep from doing just that. I LOVE THIS CAR! Then I look over at Paul. White knuckled, holding on for all he has. But we are laughing having a great time! Lap #3 is starting, Paul goes from "Don't spin it!" to "Don't roll it!" Several 6's pull out, leaving me a great shot at Robin. Caught her, but how to pass? This is still a parade lap after all. Ya, right! Problem solved. Her bonnet comes unlatched later, and she pulls over to close it. Friendly wave as we blow by!

And I realize on thing: I am having way too much fun out here! 5 laps, and still running! This is way cool! So my better judgement kicks in, and I pull down Pit Road after 6 laps. Time to quit before I get into serious trouble, either with the car or track officials.

And I do locate the Spit that was running earlier. Owned and driven by Bill Shanahan out of New York. Sweet car, won the 3-hour Enduro in class, and finished 6th overall. Also associated with ADU-4B and ADU-7B. Great to find these people and cars out there.



Also located Ted from TSI. Got to chat with him quite a bit about Spits and GT6's.

Then, unfortunately, it was time to head back to Tampa. Had to be to work at 7:00 the next morning. Hated to leave with another full day of racing scheduled the next day, but like I always say, sometime life gets in the way. And besides, I will be back in 2 weeks for the 12 hours.

The drive back was uneventful, albeit much slower than the drive down. This was very much to Paul's satisfaction. We did find a TR6 for sale on the side of the road. It was way to rusty for anything other than a parts car, so we drove on. And once again, my daily driver of a GT6+ got me there and back, so life is good. And I will always remember my laps around Sebring. ■



Susan Hensley sent a few pictures of her at CVAR Driver's School & Vintage Races at Texas World Speedway in March. "I got Tristan out and he did great, except for Sunday, when he blew a head gasket. No big deal -- I am preparing a full-race block anyway for the next event! It was great fun!"

# Should Have Been on the Track

BY ANONYMOUS

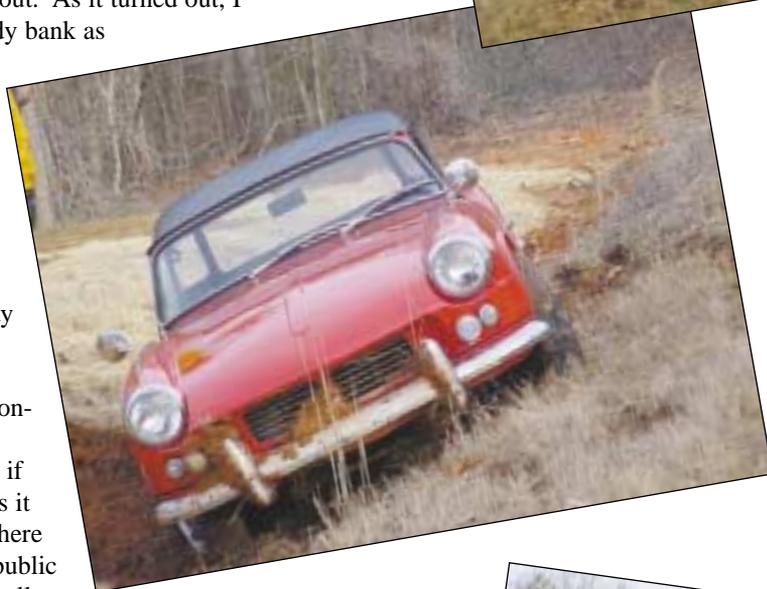
“A local LBC guy plans these weekend jaunts that take us about 2 or 3 hours out into the North Georgia wilderness for some “spirited” driving. Usually this means driving them just about as hard as they will go and really opening them up a bit. Well, today, we took off on one with 5 cars with a Bugeye leading and an MGB following us up. My wife and I were in the Mk2 Spit which was the #4 car in line behind an XKE coupe. As I rounded a corner at about 75 Mph or so, the car started to oversteer and the rear wheels broke loose on me. The rear of the car caught the front end of the car just about where the curve straightened out. As it turned out, I backed her into a rather muddy bank as

you can see in the photos. Lucky enough, neither of us were injured and believe it or not, the Spitfire only got a little dirty. A passerby in a 4wd was kind enough to stop by and pulled me out with a chain.

After digging the majority of the dirt out of the grill a closer inspection revealed no damage whatsoever and we continued on with the drive.

Now, you can print these if you really want to, but I guess it was a little foolish to be out there throwing the cars around on public roads like this. I think we’ve all done it at one time or another or we wouldn’t be LBC owners but I certainly wouldn’t want to encourage someone else to act this childish :) Anyway, use your good judgment and do with the photos what you will. I feel pretty lucky that we got away with it scott free as we did. We took it down to the local car-wash and hosed her off this evening and she looks as good as she ever has.

I have made the instant decision though that my little 155SR13 tires have got to go. Those tires just simply gave out way before the chassis did. The guy in the MGB said the rear wheels did not tuck under as they’re known to do. He did say however that it was kind of a graceful slide for what that’s worth.” ■



# GT6 Giveaway Parade

BY TOM BROBERG

Spitfire & GT6 Magazine along with [www.TriumphSpitfire.com](http://www.TriumphSpitfire.com) has planned the GT6 Car giveaway in accordance with the Town of Farragut TN's 4th of July Parade (suburb of Knoxville Tennessee).

The car is scheduled to appear in the 2001 parade and the winner is scheduled to be drawn at the conclusion of the parade by an independent representative. Spitfire & GT6 Magazine has arranged for all Spitfire and GT6 owners interested in driving their car in the 4th of July parade (starts at 9:00 sharp) to accompany the GT6 Giveaway car along the route. Note: Let us know if we need to have a tow bar handy!

The winner will be contacted by phone ASAP or if present can drive the car home...and the win-

ner's name will be posted on-line July 5, 2001 at [www.TriumphSpitfire.com](http://www.TriumphSpitfire.com).

There is still time to get your name in the drawing! 3 easy ways to enter!

The NASS has announced their interest to join the holiday festivities of the car give-away and hopes to hold their first ever "Spit-Together"

in Knoxville over the 4th of July period. Final plans and organization were not complete at press time but will be released and posted on-line at [www.TriumphSpitfire.com](http://www.TriumphSpitfire.com)... but mark your calendars now for these dates. Remember Knoxville is only 30 minutes from the Spitfire friendly towns of the Smoky Mountains. (Pigeon Forge, Gatlinburg,

Dollywood) and an hour from Chattanooga (Tennessee Aquarium, Chattanooga Choo-Choo).

Good Luck to all that are qualified to win the GT6! ■



## 3 Ways to Win 6!



Visit [www.triumphspitfire.com](http://www.triumphspitfire.com) for details

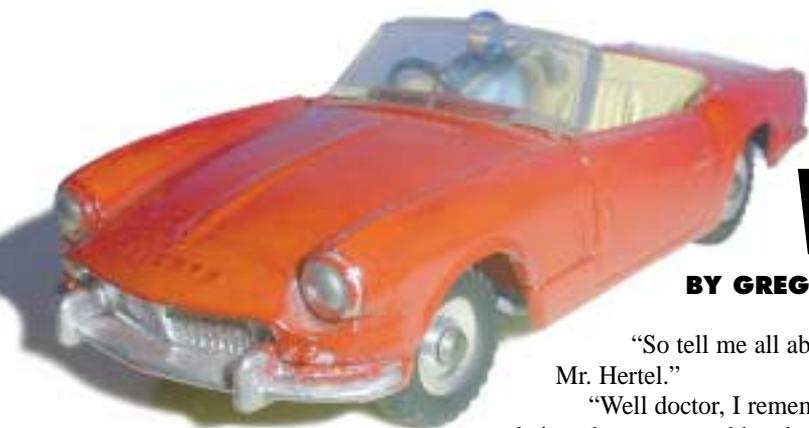
Win this GT6 by entering in one or these three easy ways:

1. Send a story in one of the following categories: Spitfire or GT6 Tech Tips, My Classic Triumph Car, Restoring or Modifying a Spitfire or GT6, General Interest Spitfire/GT6 story.
2. Order a product from the [triumphspitfire.com](http://triumphspitfire.com) web site or
3. Be a current subscriber of Spitfire & GT6 Magazine



**SPITFIRE & GT6**  
MAGAZINE

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# Very Small Spitfires

BY GREG HERTEL, DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY BY BRUCE CARR

“So tell me all about it Mr. Hertel.”

“Well doctor, I remember being eleven years old and my parents took me to see the film, *The Battle of Britain*, you know, the one with Laurence Olivier, Kenneth More, Christopher Plummer and Susannah York. And Robert Shaw and Michael Caine were wing commanders of squadrons of SPITFIRES and Hurricanes. It was that lazy blue-skied summer of 1940 and those dashing chaps with ascots in their flightsuits sat around Bingham Hill waiting for the enemy to attack. At a moment’s notice the alarm bell would be sounded and the squadrons would scramble. The SPITFIRES taxied down the runway and then soared into attack formation, eventually engaging the enemy in an aerial ballet of jousting knights. ‘Never have so many, owed so much to so few who flew SPITFIRES’...”

“Mr. Hertel, please get off my desk, lie down on the couch and take my scarf off from around your neck.”

“But you see doctor, I was there in the cockpit of one of those SPITFIRES, firing off round after round, looking in the mirror above my head to see if anyone was on my tail, listening to Robert Shaw on the radio saying, attack, attack, attack, attack, attack, saluting the tip of my wing to the pilot of a Messerschmitt 109 who I’d just shot down, and doing a victory roll over the wind sock on the aerodrome as I flew back to base in my bullet-ridden SPITFIRE.”

“Mr. Hertel sit down! Please! Clearly you have an obsessive cinematic fantasy. Your ‘obsession’ is clearly based upon the delusion that owning a Spitfire would turn you into a dashing RAF pilot. It isn’t possible that an eleven-year-old boy could fly an airplane, let alone own one.”

“That’s where you’re wrong doctor. Soon after I saw the movie, I did get a SPITFIRE, a Dinky die-cast model of a SPITFIRE Mk II aircraft. It was that first die-cast model of a SPITFIRE, that started the obsession...”

Like many British car enthusiasts I know, my double guilty pleasure in life is ownership of a vintage Spitfire, and the accumulation of an ever-growing collection of die-cast model cars, including a couple of Spitfire models. Most of my collection is

from the golden age of die-cast manufacturing which took place between 1950 and 1970, when U.K. companies such as Dinky, Corgi and Matchbox produced scores of British sportscars in 1/43 and 1/64 scales. TR-2’s and 3’s, MGA’s and B’s, Lotus Elans and E-Types all found their way into the hands of excited children around the world. With this abundance of models, sadly, one marque of British sportscar was ignored or not given the same attention as other British sportscars. Yes, you guessed it: The Spitfire.

This lack attention has continued through the last thirty years. Contemporary die-cast manufacturers such as Brumm, Corgi, Corgi Classics, Detail Cars, Dinky, Elicor, Kyosho, Lledo, Matchbox Dinky, Minichamps, Model Box, Onyx, Vanguard and Vitesse continue to make beautiful models of classic British sportscars, but none of them have made any Spitfires. How come?



## THE DINKY MODEL #114-G SPITFIRE

With the critical success and popularity of the original Spitfire IV (Mark I) introduced in 1962, it appears that Dinky decided to manufacture the first 1/43 scale, die-cast model of a Spitfire.

Originally released in 1963, the Dinky model was described as an, “Open sports car with cast body, opening hood and base, turned hubs, black tires, driver in a blue dress, clear windshield, silver or jewel headlights, silver grille and bumpers, red or orange taillights.” (Force) The first variation, manufactured between 1963 and 1965, was painted metallic silver grey with a red interior, a black base and engine. A second variation subsequently appeared with a red body, cream interior, a light grey base and a silver engine.

As the swinging 60’s carried on, a timely third variation appeared in 1966, painted in metallic gold,

More info  
from the  
Web

Triumph  
Scale Model  
Collector’s Site:  
<http://www1.tip.nl/~t479768/index.htm>

Uraniwa Spitfire:  
<http://www.ask.ne.jp/~kas/uraniwa/hoby.index.html>

with a red interior, charcoal base, black engine, jewel headlights and a "I've got a (figure of a tiger), in my tank" decal on the boot lid.

The final variation appeared in 1970 with a metallic purple body and engine, a gold interior, unpainted base and jeweled headlights. Actual production numbers of the Dinky Spitfire are unknown. However, it is a fairly rare model, not often seen at antique toy shows. Mint-in-box models of the silver, red and gold variations will currently cost between \$150.00 to \$ 200.00 U. S. dollars. Mint-in-box models of the purple variation will fetch even more as they appear to be the rarest of the four variations made.

**THE SOLIDO MODELS #1921 AND #4539 - TRIUMPH SPITFIRE MK I**

Over twenty years passed until the next 1/43 die-cast model of a Spitfire appeared. This time, the manufacturer was the French company Solido, who, in the early 1990's produced two variations.

The first Solido variation (#1921) was part of a series of rally cars entitled the "Racing Series". This British Racing Green, hard top model, came with the livery of the Triumph Club of France and Tour of France Auto Rally. The model is reasonably well detailed with chrome bumpers, headlights, muffler, grille, wheel covers and gas cap. There are even red taillights. The black interior is correct with a centre cluster of gauges and a right-hand drive steering wheel.

The second variation, (#4539) was an identical casting to model # 1921 only it was a red-bodied convertible.

Mint-in-box values of these models are somewhat less than the Dinky models. If you can find them at flea markets or antique toy shows, expect to pay in the \$30.00 to \$40.00 U.S. dollar range.

**THE CHRONO/SUN STAR MODEL #1040 - 1970 SPITFIRE MK IV**

The most recent, and the first 1/24 scale model ever made, the Chrono/Sun Star is indeed the most splendidly detailed die-cast model of a Spitfire yet produced.

The Chrono model was originally stamped on the baseplate as Chrono model and packaged as a Chrono model. It was made in China by the A-Model Collection Co. Ltd. in 1998(?). Subsequently, the identical Chrono-stamped on the baseplate model was introduced to the North American market, in a re-packaged form, by Sun Star America Inc. of Hayward California. The models are identical but the packaging is different - go figure.

This model has three colour variations, white, black and of course, British Racing Green. As the scale of this model is larger than the two previous Spitfire models, its sophistication and detailed features make it a joy to behold.

Both doors open, and when the bonnet is lifted, a precisely detailed engine appears. As well, the rack and pinion steering, actually moves the front wheels when you turn the steering wheel.

The interior features an accurately detailed dashboard with all the gauges, a gear selector, a handbrake, window cranks and door locks. The exterior detailing is exquisite with correct Mark IV badging on the rear wings, period British Leyland badges on either side of the bonnet beside the chrome latches, fine black striping along the rear wing seams and a driver's side mirror.

The silver wheels with black hubs are correct and the rear bumper has the raised Triumph plinth perfectly centered under the rear license plate and boot lid handle.

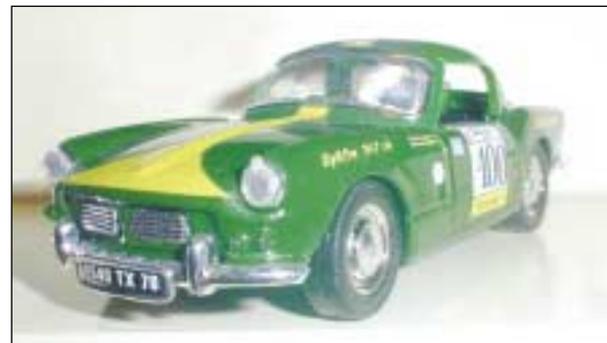
Despite all the attention to detail with this model, there is one small inaccuracy. The model has UK license plates and no parking lights on the front or rear wings. (Mandatory for all Spitfires exported to North America) Yet, it is a left-hand drive car... Hmmm. It must be a U.K. car that was converted to left-hand drive?

The Chrono/Sun Star model is still readily available for around \$25.00 US dollars, and in fact, was advertised on the back page of the Spring 2000 edition of Spitfire and GT6 Magazine.

Certainly, if you own a Mark IV, you must have one of these models.

So why is it that Spitfires are so under-represented in the ranks of die-cast models compared to other British sportscars? Certainly, there were enough of the real ones produced - over 300,000 during the eighteen years the car was in production.

I've often wondered about this, and while preparing this article, I asked a number of other collectors if they had any ideas why the Spitfire





## "I wanted a red Spitfire 1500 model..."

Everywhere I looked all I could find was White, Black, or Green MKIII's. I did find a site that sells Spitfire models that are 1/43 rd scale at K&R Replicas, but they run about 23.50pds (\$33.72



US) for a model you assemble and finish yourself and it is the size of a Matchbox car. If that's the size you are after, then check them out as they have MKI, MKII, MKIII, MKIV, and 1500 models available.

I wanted a larger model, something in a 1/18th scale. Chrono offered the white, black, and green, but no other colors. I talked to a couple people online that told me the Chronos were easy to take apart so I decided to try it. I found a good deal on ebay for a white 70 MKIII. It had a tan interior which would need repainted to black. After looking it over I started taking out the bottom screws and placing all the parts in a box for safe keeping. Note: Chrono models do not come with disassembly or re-assembly instructions!



was so neglected. None of them had any theories, in fact, they'd never even noticed. (Figures. What did Rodney Dangerfield say about getting no respect?)

So here's a theory I'd like to propose: When you look at the actual production records of the Spitfire, you discover that almost 60% of the cars were exported to Europe and North America. When you read current British sportscar magazines that list Spitfires for sale, such as *Classic and Sports Car*, you don't often see many of them available. Could it be that because the car was primarily produced for export and not as visible in the U.K. as MG's and TR's, that the main manufacturers of die-cast models of that era, (Corgi, Dinky and Matchbox) decided to over-look the Spitfire? And consequently, subsequent manufacturers of die-cast models have continued to over-look the Spitfire?

Whether my theory has any validity or not, I don't know. If you have any thoughts about it, or if you have additional information about any other die-cast models of Spitfires that I've failed to mention, please e-mail me at [gregory.hertel@etel.tdsb.on.ca](mailto:gregory.hertel@etel.tdsb.on.ca) I'd be happy to learn about what you know. While I await your response, I'll be in the toy room with my Spitfires... "Attack, attack, attack, attack, attack." ■

*Works Cited: Dr. Edward Force, Dinky Toys. Schiffer Publishing Ltd., West Chester, Pennsylvania, 1988.*



Watch and remember what you are doing. I took out all the screws I could, then I started to pry off each plastic part. I used two small flat bladed screwdrivers and carefully lifted and worked them under the plastic until the part would release. Some things like the tail lights had a tab inside that I cut off before popping them out. The only part I did not remove was the steering wheel, for fear it would break.

After it was all apart, I used fine sandpaper and sanded all of the painted surfaces and wiped them down. I taped off the bottom frame around the motor mounts and the steering wheel to preserve the black paint. I used a spray can of Testors enamel paint in a hot red color to spray the bonnet, doors, and tub. I gave it several light coats. While everything was drying, I sprayed some paint in a cup and hand painted the windscreen frame and touched up inside the doors. There were a couple of small pieces from the firewall that had to be hand painted red as well. I then hand painted the interior black over the tan plastic. There was a bit of black trim paint along the boot wings and some silver behind the tail lights.

After everything was the correct colors and dried overnight I started re-assembly. Remembering how I took it apart, I reversed the steps and started gluing the pieces using model glue. I fitted everything back together and ended up with no extra pieces left over. You can see that the finished car looks pretty good. I still have to reproduce the decals and place them on the car. I downloaded the Triumph Hood font from [triumphspitfire.com](http://triumphspitfire.com) and will print the Spitfire 1500 on clear label stock and trim them to fit. While it is not a true 1500, I like the result and have it displayed in my living room. I placed it well out of reach of my three year old grandson, who noticed it the first time he walked in the room and claimed it was his TOY! I told him NO, that's grandpa's TOY!!"—Howard Baugues

# It's Official!

## North American Spitfire Squadron is Off and Flying

North American Spitfire Squadron are the first marque/model specific enthusiasts club to exist in North America, specifically centered around the Triumph Spitfire and GT6.

We are a group of enthusiasts who simply want to maintain and further our passions. Our home base is here in North America, but welcome 'foreign agents'. You don't have to be an owner, just enjoy the marque. Come join us. Sign in to <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/nass> for access to our facilities and further information or email [nass@write.me](mailto:nass@write.me).

As a special incentive, all membership applications received before June 30, 2001 will be eligible for Charter Member status. This status will never again be made available, and we are developing ideas to make it more valuable. This status is intended to reward all the people who helped get the organization "Off the Ground." The certificate, I.D. Card, Windscreen Decal and other items will all be imprinted to indicate your Charter Member status.

Foreign Agents (that is, those outside of North America) are welcomed and encouraged to join NASS, although we will need to have U.S. funds for any and all payments. We will send the same membership packet to foreign members, however, at this time we do not plan to mail the newsletter overseas so that we can keep our expenses under control. We will make the newsletter available to all members over the Internet. (For the record, Canada IS a part of North America.)

Logo Items will be made available for purchase as soon as possible and will include whatever we can get developed. Such things as shirts (T's, Denim, Polo, etc.) Hats, Jackets, extra windscreen decals, bumper stickers, etc. are being considered.

NASS is a Not-For-Profit Organization, so all funds collected for memberships or product purchases will be used to promote the club. Officers will not be paid in any way, though their legitimate expenses for club materials will be reimbursed if approved by a vote of the officers and executive board. The treasurer will be providing quarterly reports in the newsletter regarding the financial standing of the club.

We are also actively planning our first National Spit-Together. It looks like we are going to shoot for the environs of Knoxville, Tennessee on July 3

and 4. A parade is held in the suburb of Farragut on the 4th, and we thought representatives of The Motherland ought to be in attendance. A Spitfire-Friendly parade route is used, and we would probably end up with a bar-beque and some low-key awards being handed out. (Somebody said something about finding a few cases of Spitfire Ale for the event, so I KNOW I'm marking out my calendar for those dates.) Look for more information on this issue in the future, but write the dates on your calendar NOW!

Visit

[www.geocities.com/bauguesh/nass.pdf](http://www.geocities.com/bauguesh/nass.pdf) to download an Adobe PDF membership application. In addition, the NASS website (in the files section) has instructions for having you send a check or money order for \$20 (Note: U.S. funds only, made out to NASS or North American Spitfire Squadron) to the address below;

NASS

ATTN: New Membership

P.O. Box 30806

Knoxville, TN 37930 USA

For your \$20, you will be provided the following:

- 1) A Membership Certificate (suitable for framing).
  - 2) A Members I.D. Card (for your wallet or purse).
  - 3) Four "Hand Out" Cards (to give to prospective members).
  - 4) A Newsletter Subscription (published quarterly)
  - 5) A Windscreen Decal (with our cool new logo)
  - 6) The right to buy logo items at discounted prices
  - 7) An automatic invitation to all club activities.
  - 8) Discounted prices on any club sponsored activities.
  - 9) Access to the clubs web site & email list service.
  - 10) Camaraderie with fellow Spitfire devotees.
- (Please allow 5-7 weeks for delivery of items.)*

NASS is officially Off The Ground And Flying!

Thanks,

Joe Guinan, NASS President (NE)

[spitfirejoe@email.com](mailto:spitfirejoe@email.com)



# British Car Shows and Events

## APRIL

**Florida**, Pensacola, April 21

Pensacola British Car Beach Bash, Panhandle British Car Association, 334-961-7171

**Texas**, Bertram, April 22

Mac's Pack Back Roads Tour/Poker Run 2001, 512-355-3618, camac@bigfoot.com

**Georgia**, Braselton, Road Atlanta, April 27-29

The 24th Annual Walter Mitty Challenge, Historic Sports Car Racing

**New Mexico**, Las Cruces, April 27-29

British Car Days 2001, (915) 581-3123, Machado338@cs.com

**North Carolina**, Winston-Salem, April 27-29

The Gathering, Triumph Club Of the Carolinas, 704-882-3001

**Connecticut**, Milford, April 29

7th Annual All British Auto Jumble, Connecticut Triumph Register, (860) 228-0439, BigTR6Fan@aol.com

**Ontario**, Ancaster, April 29

Ancaster British Sports Car Flea Market & Car Show

**Texas**, Dallas, April 29

All-British Car Day 2001, randyz@ticnet.com

**Virginia**, Mount Vernon, April 29

Britain on the Green at Woodlawn, Capital Triumph Register, 703-521-2245

## MAY

**Texas**, College Station, May 4-6

VTR South Central Region 2001 Convention, Texas Triumph Register, 281-469-7532

**New Jersey**, Succasunna, Horse Lake Park, May 5

Britfest 2001, New Jersey Triumph Association & Moss Motors, 201-796-8648, ctregidga@worldnet.att.net

**Tennessee**, Townsend, May 5

14th Annual Springtime in the Smokies British Car Show,

Blount British Cars Ltd., 865-984-8711

**California**, Van Nuys, Woodley Park, May 6 (9 am)

First Annual Los Angeles Concours Europa British & European Car Meet, 310-392-6605, rfeibusch@loop.com

**New Jersey**, Morristown, Lewis Morris Park, May 6

English Car Day, New Jersey Triumph Association, 973-543-2395

**Virginia**, Richmond, The Bolders, May 6

9th Annual British Classic Car Meet, Richmond Triumph Register, 804-527-1515, kmntr6@aol.com

**Georgia**, Braselton, Chateau Elan, May 12

British Car Day, British Motor Car Club

**Kentucky**, Lexington, May 17-20

Springing 2001, Bluegrass Austin Healey Club

**Pennsylvania**, Carlisle, May 18-20

Import-Kit/Replicar Nationals 2001, Carlisle Productions, 717-243-7855

**Worldwide**, May 19-27

"Drive Your British Car Week". Get your British cars out on the roads during this week!

**Florida**, Wakulla Springs State Park (south of Tallahassee), May 19  
British Car and Bike Day, Big Bend MG's, Tel: (850) 222-9317

**California**, Dixon, May 20

Annual All British Motorcar Show & Swap, United British Sports Car Club of Sacramento, sawhill@earthlink.net

**Massachusetts**, Springfield, at Smith & Wesson, May 20

JCNA Northeast Regional Slalom, Jaguar Clubs of North America (all marques welcome) hagopian@mail.tds.net

**New Jersey**, Tabernacle, May 20

British Motor Classics at Atsion, 856-751-7773

**Pennsylvania**, Fort Washington, May 26

Hope Lodge Car Show, Delaware Valley Triumphs Ltd, 610-825-2617

**Washington**, Bellevue, May 26-27

All British Classic Tour - Rally, 425-644-7874

**New York**, Watkins Glen International Raceway, May 30-June3

Watkins Glen Historic Races, Historic Sports Car Racing

## JUNE

**Quebec**, Lac Beauport, Centre de Ski Le Relais, June 1-3

Rendez-Vous British Quebec, Le Rendez-Vous des Anglaises

**Kentucky**, Long Island, June 2

Marques on the Green, 812-923-7349, dons59tr3a@aol.com

**New Jersey**, Clinton, June 3

Red Mill British Car Day, 908-713-6251

**Ohio**, Perrysburg, Ft. Meigs Park, June 3

Lake Erie British Car Show, Lake Erie British Car Club, 419-865-9790

or 419-882-6936, lakeeriebritish@msn.com

**New York**, Watkins Glen, June 5-8

Watkins Glen Historic Races, Historic Sports Car Racing

**Colorado**, Denver, Rocky Mountain Center, June 8-10

49th Annual Rallye Glenwood Springs, MG Car Club

**Manitoba**, Winnipeg, June 8-10

11th Annual Vintage Sports Car Rendezvous, Triumph Drivers Club/Austin Healey Club/Mini Club

**Missouri**, St. Joseph, June 8-9

Heartland MG Regional, 816-795-9628,

HeartlandMG@KansasCity.com

**New Jersey**, Westwood, June 9

A Touch of England, NJ Triumph Association

**New York**, Louisville, June 9-10

The Eighth Annual "The British are Coming" Weekend.

MG Car Club - Long Island Centre

**New York**, Williamsville, Rose Garden Rest, June 10

Euro Car Day VIII, 716-662-1696 or 716-822-3812

**North Carolina**, Clemmons, Tanglewood Park, June 10

British Car Day South,

**Texas**, College Station, Texas World Speedway, June 23-24

Driver's School & Vintage Races, CVAR

**Maryland**, Bowie, Allen Pond Park, June 24

The Original British Car Day, Chesapeake Chapter of the NEMGTR, Ltd., 410-592-8610

## Europe

### APRIL

**UK**, BRSCC Castle Combe Wiltshire W, 7 May

TR Register/ TSSC Race Championship, Cambridge Motorsport

**Worldwide**, May 19-27

"Drive Your British Car Week". Get your British cars out on the roads during this week

**United Kingdom**, Derbyshire, The Hardinge Arms Kings Newton, 30

### MAY

Classic Car Meet, The Midlands Classic Car Club, Tel: 01283 732403

## JUNE

**UK**, Pembrey Carmarthen S.Wales, 10 June

TR Register/ TSSC Race Championship, Cambridge Motorsport

**UK**, Silverstone Northants Midlands, 16 June

British Sports Car Day, Tel: 01932 857381

**UK**, Pembrey Carmarthen S.Wales, 10 June

TR Register/ TSSC Race Championship, Cambridge Motorsport

**UK**, Hereford and Worcester, Avoncroft Musm, Nr Bromsgrove, 26 June

Avoncroft - Vintage & Classic Bike Day & 'Jumble, Greens (UK) Ltd,

Tel: 01684 575902, riagrn101@aol.com

**Switzerland**, 30 June

Night Drive, Spitfire Club Switzerland, Club@Spitfire.ch

## JULY

**UK**, Gloucestershire, Cheltenham Race Course, 1-2 July

Cheltenham Vintage & Classic Auction Sale, Greens (UK) Ltd,

Tel: 01684 575902, riagrn101@aol.com

**UK**, Croft Northumberland NE, 7-8 July

TR Register/ TSSC Race Championship, Cambridge Motorsport

**UK**, Alveley Village, Shropshire, 15 July, 10:30 a.m.

Alveley Classic Car Show 2001, (01746) 780637,

alveley@deronet.fsnet.co.uk

**UK**, Rockingham Leicestershire Midlands, 28-29 July

TR Register/ TSSC Race Championship, Cambridge Motorsport

## AUGUST

**UK**, Cadwell Lincolnshire NE, 12 August

TR Register/ TSSC Race Championship, Cambridge Motorsport

**Switzerland**, 18/19 August

Weekend, Spitfire Club Switzerland & Swiss Mini Club,

Club@Spitfire.ch

**UK**, Snetterton Norfolk E, 19 August

TR Register/ TSSC Race Championship, Cambridge Motorsport

**Holland**, Zandvoort (provisional), 25-26 August

TR Register/ TSSC Race Championship, Cambridge Motorsport

**Switzerland**, Mollis (Airfield), 26 August

Autumn Outing (drive to the British Car Meeting), Spitfire Club

**Switzerland**, Club@Spitfire.ch

**United Kingdom**, Derbyshire, The Hardinge Arms, 29 August

Classic Car Meet, The Midlands Classic Car Club, Tel: 01283 732403

**We need your 2001 events especially European events!**

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](http://www.TriumphSpitfire.com/Events.html)

14th Annual  
**Springtime in the Smokies**  
British Car Show

**May 5, 2001**

Door Prizes • Popularity Awards • 165 Cars

**Townsend, Tennessee**

Sponsored by Blount British Cars Ltd.

For more information call 865-984-8711  
or email: jhenriks@icx.net



3rd Annual All British  
**“Run to the Gorge”**

*May 26-27, 2001*

Take an exciting trip from the Seattle area, ending at Hood River Oregon. There will be a dinner, awards and prizes. Sunday, more great roads on the return run. Entry forms are available at [www.abfm.com](http://www.abfm.com) or call Arnie Taub at (425) 644-7874



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British  
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**The British are Coming Once Again!**

*3rd Annual Lake Erie British Car Show*

Sunday June 3, Perrysburg, Ohio

- Dash plaques for the first 100 registrants
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**(419) 865-9790**

or email [lakeeriebritish@msn.com](mailto:lakeeriebritish@msn.com)





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website: [www.club.triumph.org.uk](http://www.club.triumph.org.uk)  
email: [enquiries@club.triumph.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@club.triumph.org.uk)

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Dept. SG6 Membership  
15218 W. Warren, Dearborn, MI 48216

For more info, send a SASE or visit:

[www.vtr.org](http://www.vtr.org)



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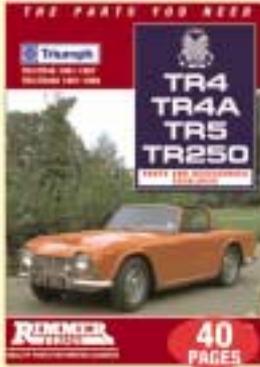
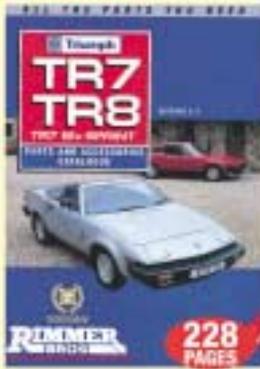
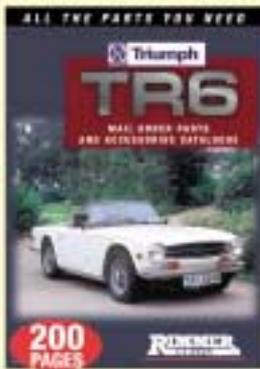
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## Look for us at:

Apr. 5-8	SVRA Roebing Road	Aug. 30/Sept 3	SVRA/VSCCA Lime Rock
26-29	HSR Walter Mitty, Road Atlanta	Sept. 6-9	SVRA Watkins Glen
May 17-20	SVRA Road America	13-16	HSR Atlanta
May 30/June 3	HSR Watkins Glen	Oct. 4-7	SVRA Summit Point
June 21-24	SVRA Mid-Ohio	25-28	SVRA V.I.R
June 29/July 1	VARAC Mosport	Nov. 1-4	HSR Daytona
July 5-8	HSR V.I.R.		



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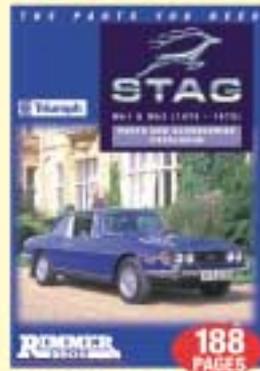
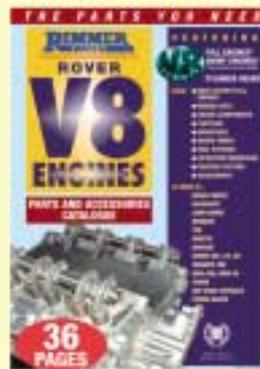


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