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VARA at Buttonwillow, CA



photo by Paul Flores

#95 Tony Drews, 1963 Triumph TR4; #167 John Frymark, 1967 Triumph TR4A.

CVAR Marvelous May Races

Eagles Canyon Raceway, TX

May 17-18, 2014

— story by *Don Gwynne*

For CVAR's 23rd Annual Marvelous May Races, Race Chairman Bobby Whitehead pulled together a great weekend of activities, both on and off the Eagles Canyon track.

Saturday morning started with 15 minute Practice & Qualifying sessions for each race group, followed by 15 minute races for Group 1, Group 2, Group 3 and Group 4 before the



photo by Paul Valentine

#36 Bob Rowley, 1967 Lola T70.

lunch break. Non-racers got to tour the Eagles Canyon course during a lunchtime track tour drive-around. This popular event was very well attended, including many members of the Red River Triumph Club.

The 4th Annual British Small Bore Festival (BSBF) feature race after lunch Saturday had 48 under 2 liter closed wheel British cars entered, with 30 of them actually taking the green flag. Not all finished; there were 8 DNFs. In this fourth year of the event, some cars still sported their inaugural BSBF stickers which read "British Race Cars Don't Leak Oil...They Just Mark Their Territory."

Ben Hertzog won the 30 minute BSBF feature race driving his C Production white

and red #26 Lotus Elan S1 roadster. Along the way to overall victory, Ben led flag to flag, lapped every other car in the field and turned the race's fastest lap at 2:11.1 while doing it. Californian Jerry Barker's remarkably quick white and blue #124 Triumph Herald placed second overall, to the delight of many spectators and the chagrin of many competitors. Who knew that a Triumph Herald could be made to go that fast?! The F Production blue #45 Austin Healey Sprite driven by William Gardner finished third overall, just 1.6 seconds behind the Herald. Pete Sandy was hot on Gardner's heels, finishing just 0.2 seconds behind him, driving his F Production white and blue #04 Austin Healey bugeyed Sprite.

Although CVAR has not allowed "continuation" cars for several years, a special BSBF event rule allowed Jeff Sloan and Chalmer McWilliams to drive their Caterham Super Sevens in the BSBF feature race. They achieved a sixth and seventh overall finish, respectively. George Curl was the first E Production finisher, coming ninth overall in his blue #40 MGB. Don Gwynne was the first B Sedan finisher, at 12th overall in his white #89 Mk1 Ford Escort. Robert McKenzie was the G Production class winner in his white and blue #62 Triumph Spitfire, in 17th overall. Since the two modern Caterhams were in a separate "C7" class, the first D Production

car was the red #77 Lotus Super Seven of Rodger Grantham, in 19th overall. The top finishing VB class car was driven by Hank Noble, who came in 20th overall in his silver #36A MGA.

In a continuation of the morning's first races, Group 6 and Group 7 each had their first 15 minute race. Group 7 drivers who competed in the 30 minute BSBF race had only a 15 minute break before going to the grid for their first group race of the weekend. At its completion, the afternoon round of 15 minute races for Groups 1 through 7 followed.

Race Chairman Bobby Whitehead and his business associates at Gold-N-Pawn, net generously underwrote the rental of golf carts for shuttle service all weekend (in consideration of the distance and elevation difference between the lower and upper paddocks at Eagles Canyon) and offset much of the cost of the Saturday night dinner banquet. Fort Worth's Rio Mambo restaurant brought their mobile grill and presented all the fixin's for fresh fajitas cooked trackside. Live band entertainment was provided by the South Side Blues Kings, some of whom had been in Bobby's own band some thirty years ago. Bobby briefly took the microphone with the offer of \$2.00 to sing, \$3.00 to stop, and \$5.00 to never ever sing again.



photo by Paul Valentine

#80 Steve Coleman, 1969 Ford Boss 302;
#85 James Sharp, 1971 Camaro.

Unintended Consequences and Opportunities

— story by Shawn Franks

An epic event. I took over 4000 pics and had full access including pit lane, flag stand, and of course the garages and pits.

I got to sit and spend time with Kas Kastner. I had many questions and he was gracious enough to discuss anything Triumph. He said I am official FOT media now! I was able to listen to legendary stories straight from the source.

Not only did I get to spend time with Kas, I got to discuss the golden years of Misery Manor and Group 44 with Triumph legend Rob Krokus. We have developed a relationship and I will be talking with him in the near future. He said he is sending me a package of stuff. He told me that he really enjoyed my passion for the history of these cars.

Something else that is really exciting is the discovery of a car thought to be lost years ago. The 1963 Sebring second place #38 TR4 was suspected to have been sold to Keith Files (FOT member in England) after the sale was brokered by Joe Alexander a bit ago but not confirmed, only suspected.

It had been recently shipped to England from the US for restoration. During the tear down process, there were some amazing finds. First, there were three horizontal indicator light holes on the top edge of the body line on the side door and two vertical light holes on the front of the door. A couple more peculiar finds were the extra wide filler cap hole that someone had patched



photo by Paul Valentine

#167 John Frymark, 1967 Triumph TR4A

back to normal size and auxiliary fuel pump holes on the inner wheel well. All of these holes were patched and painted over and were never apparent until the whole car had been stripped. Keith took tons of pics and was excited and positive it was an actual 1963 Sebring car. He even found out what was needed to get the car to Goodwood Revival.

It seems that all he needed to make it official was to have Kas look at these pics and write an authenticity letter indicating it was really said historic Triumph. After Kas had a chance to look these pics over, he smiled and told Keith that he would write that letter for him because that was actually the TR4 that took second place in the 1,2,3 sweep of the famous race. He explained that the three horizontal holes on the door were indicators in blue, yellow, and green and the two vertical holes were to light up the door

numbers. The filler cap was widened to get as much fuel in as quickly as possible and the auxiliary fuel pump holes were where he had drilled them over fifty years ago.

I will be doing some articles on not only the Kastner Cup and the Friends of Triumph, but will also be reporting during the build process on the progress of the famous TR4. I am so excited for the future and what it may bring for stories that should be told. I am honored to be in the position I am in with such significant historic figures offering me their wisdom and stories. I can only hope to do them proud.

About the event. The excitement in the garages was wonderful. And then there was the race. Amazing displays of gentleman-like racing and a true sense of competition among friends. Squealing tires and singing exhaust, superb staff and facilities, racers of all kinds. A superb experience!

Sunday morning began with non-denominational worship services at 7:30am, followed by 10 minute warm-up sessions for Group 1 & 7, 2 & 4 and 3 & 6. A full set of 15 minute group races preceded lunch, then it was Triumph time.

Sunday afternoon's **KASTNER CUP** race was overseen by Kas Kastner himself and his lovely wife Peggy. Kas was the competition head of Triumph "back in the day" and has written and produced several competition manuals and videos for the Triumph marque. He left Triumph when the company ended and went on to be a competition director for Nissan. Kas and Peggy drove all the way from Seaside, California for the event. Joe Alexander and his wife were also in attendance as the co-founder of the Friends of Triumph (FOT) network and forum.

Race Chairman Bobby Whitehead said that Kas Kastner gave him the highest compliment of the whole event... something like "it's neat to have all these bucket list tracks we've

been able to run at in the 12 years of the Kastner Cup, but this event at Eagles Canyon and its low key environment was what I had originally envisioned the Kastner Cup would be." Whitehead noted "In my world, that's a huge compliment and considering it was directly from Kas, it was epic." See Shawn Frank's sidebar article and photos for more FOT and Kastner Cup details.

Briefly, the SCCA-prepared yellow and red #28 Triumph TR-6 driven by Mike Munson easily took the overall win. But the silver #41 Triumph TR-3 of Greg Blake was never very far behind, winning the E Production class. Tony Drews came third overall to win D Production in his red #95 Triumph TR-4. Eight seconds behind Drews came Joe Hovey's green #20 F Production Triumph Spitfire.



photo by Paul Valentine

#44 Steven Cole, 1970 Alfa Romeo GTAM;
#76 Jim Cox, 1964 Triumph TR4.

Jerry Barker's white #124 Triumph Herald, a crowd favorite, lost third gear when the green flag dropped. Jerry soldiered on using second gear and fourth gear, but eventually lost fourth gear as well and retired. Jerry and his crew had performed an incredible overnight engine change without benefit of an engine hoist and had plenty of bruises to prove it. Just lifting a 1500 cc Spitfire engine



#186 Lou Marchant, 1959 MGA; #39 Allen Johnson, 1959 Devin Healey.

by hand is an accomplishment in itself! Rob Noyes-Smith of Albuquerque finished seventh overall, winning the VB class in his red Triumph TR-3.

Following the 30 minute FOT Kastner Cup race on Sunday, the 20 minute CVAR Championship points races commenced. First was the Group 1 race for A Sedan, A Production and FIA Class. Although 16 cars were entered, only nine came under the Starter's orders. Although CVAR President Herb Hilton sat on the pole in his recently-acquired blue #17 notchback Mustang, George Kopecky took the overall lead quickly in his black #97 Porsche RSR and held it to the checkered flag to win FIA Class. Hilton ran second for most of the race, only to get caught on the last lap by Steve Coleman in his blue and orange #80 Boss 302 Mustang for the A Sedan win. Jim Sharp started the race on the inside of the second row in his new yellow #85 Camaro, and ran well through half distance, then the car faded somewhat on its shakedown cruise. The Camaro is beautifully prepared, and is a big weight and speed change compared to the ex-Hap Sharp 1961 Cooper T-56 FJr that Jim regularly races. Scott Pfueller took an unopposed A Production win in his red/white/blue #137 Corvette coupe.

Although there was a large number of entries (45) eligible for the **GROUP 2** (DP, EP, FP, FP2 and CS) race, only 16 came to the starting line. This was probably due to the large number of British car drivers who made a long tow to take part in Saturday's BSBF race and/or Sunday's Kastner Cup race but needed to head for home.

CVAR recently created experimental Group 2 Supplemental Classes (DP2, EP2, FP2, CS2) for cars no longer competitive in SCCA but which are prepared beyond CVAR's regular FP class rules, i.e., to GCR versions after 1972. See the CVAR website under "Car Classifications/Group 2/Group 2 Supplement" for details. Jeff Norris was the only driver to take advantage of this new opportunity, and was rewarded with an eighth overall finish and the unopposed FP2 class win in his black #44 MG Midget. Up at the front, Pete Sandy started on pole in his white #04 bugeyed Sprite, but was soon overtaken by Scott Brady driving his blue #14 Fiat Abarth 124 Spider. Brady took the overall and EP win, Sandy finished second overall to

win FP. Bob Pinkston's red #7 VW Beetle took an unopposed C Sedan win. It wasn't the fastest car in the Group 2 field, but it produced a lot of spectator interest and smiles.

Several Formula Vees (uncharacteristically) experienced engine problems on Saturday, so the **GROUP 3** grid on

Sunday afternoon was also only about half the registered entrants. Nine cars took the green flag. Dr. Greg Byrne sat on pole, but at half distance, he was caught by Dwight Calkins, who started fourth. Calkins' red #87 Lynx led laps 5, 6 and 7, only to get passed on lap 8 by Byrne's red #11 Zink. Calkins got it back for good before the checkered flag fell, winning by a 1.1 second margin over Bill Griffith's black #33 Warrior, who had also managed to pass Byrne. Byrne finished third, only about 0.1 second behind Griffith. During the last lap, two FV drivers went off at turn 4 into big hay bales, and one of them encountered a guardrail after plowing clear through a hay bale. That driver now strongly recommends wearing some form of a head and neck restraint system, most especially in an open cockpit car. CVAR endorses this recommendation.

As Allen Johnson sat on the pole for the **GROUP 4** race, he may have wondered whether his bellowing Chevy V-8 could keep him safely in front of some of the more nimble cars behind him on the grid. Turns out that the answer was "yes". Johnson led from pole to checkered flag in his black #39 Chevy-powered 1959 Devin Healey. The real action took place behind him. Earl Zwickey started dead last in his yellow #20 Ginetta G4, and carved his way through the pack all the way to second overall by the fifth lap, which he held to the end to win the VA class, less than 5 seconds behind Johnson. The last time Earl had raced the Ginetta was at Eagles Canyon in May 2013, and in the interim just about everything got rebuilt. He arrived at ECR with some loose ends to tie up, and it wasn't until Sunday at about noon that he got the car shipshape and through Tech. Its performance in the Sunday afternoon points race made all the effort seem worthwhile. New Mexico's Henry Morrison won the VB class by finishing third overall in his cream and orange Elva Courier. This car has a very well documented racing history all the way back to when it was new in 1959, with never a day on the street. Way cool! The SFP "Spec Sprite" race within Group 4 went to Wes

Wigginton in his lime green #77 MG Midget in sixth overall. This car has a long and proud history with CVAR, albeit while wearing a somewhat more subdued shade of green. Wes is doing "The Turtle" proud.

Some of the **GROUP 6** drivers were already on their way home when the green flag fell. A few, like Angus Lemon, had suffered mechanical problems earlier. Scott Clark started on pole in his black and yellow #13 Lola T-540, but was soon overtaken by Mike Bond's green #98 Legrand Mk21. Clark took back the lead on lap 3 and held it to the end for the overall and FF2 class win. After Nathan Thompson's blue Lotus 23B BSR dropped out after the first lap, Steve Lafferty went on to finish third overall for the FF1 class win. Robert Rodgers took an unopposed FA class win in his red #44 Abarth in fourth overall.

The final race of the weekend was for **GROUP 7** cars (C Production and B Sedan). San Antonio's Skip Duplissey took it all, with pole position, fastest lap, and a flag to flag win in his C Production green and orange #71 Porsche 911T. Some spirited racing went on behind him, however. Richard Reeves'



#05 Mike Rogers, 1965 Autodynamics FV; #98 William Wolff, 1965 Zink C-4.

green #78 Porsche 911 Targa started in eighth position, but he charged up to take over the second overall spot from Berkeley Merrill's silver and red #4 Datsun 240Z on the second lap and held it to the finish, for the second C Production spot. Although Merrill finished third overall and third in CP at the checker, he had to battle Mark Hanna's yellow #75 Porsche 911S from laps 2 through 5 before settling into the third slot to the finish. Little Rock's Louis Gladfelter simply checked out on the other B Sedan contestants, finishing fifth overall. His white and yellow #19 Datsun 510 held a two second a lap advantage, and he bested three other B Sedans and three other C Production cars along the way to the B Sedan class win.

Thus commenced CVAR's summer break, with the next race weekend scheduled for 12-14 September 2014 at Texas World Speedway (TWS) in College Station, Texas.

This will be a combined three day Driver's School and a regular slate of races. Y'all come!

BRITISH SMALL BORE

PL CL DRIVER/CAR

- 1 CP B. Hertzog/1963 Lotus Elan S1 Roadster 2:11.133
- 1 CS J. Barker/1963 Triumph Herald 2:14.504
- 1 FP W. Gardner/1963 Austin Healey Sprite 2:15.144



photo by Paul Valentine

#6 Anthony Nigro, 1972 Porsche 911.

- 2 FP P. Sandy/1959 Austin Healey Sprite
- 3 FP T. Bond/1971 MG Midget
- 1 C7 J. Sloan/1996 Caterham 2:13.039
- 2 C7 C. McWilliams/1996 Caterham Super 7
- 4 FP P.D. Sohn/1972 MG Midget
- 1 EP G. Curl/1964 MGB 2:18.550
- 5 FP J. Hovey/1967 Triumph Spitfire
- 6 FP B. Collins/1972 Triumph Spitfire
- 1 BS D. Gwynne/1970 English Ford Escort 2:20.660
- 7 FP J. Walker/1961 Austin Healey Sprite
- 2 EP G. Perser/1966 MGB
- 3 EP K. Morris/1969 MGB
- 4 EP M. Baker/1963 MGB
- 1 GP R. Mackenzie/1962 Triumph Spitfire 4 2:33.785
- 8 FP D. Vick/1964 Triump Spitfire
- 1 DPR R. Grantham/1962 Lotus Super 7 2:17.368
- 1 VB H. Noble/1962 MG MGA Mk II 2:22.036
- 9 FP C. Duroy/1968 MG Midget
- 2 VB H. Morrison/1959 Elva Courier

KASTNER CUP

PL CL DRIVER/CAR

- 1 CP M. Munson/1970 Triumph TR6 2:13.562
- 1 EP G. Blake/1958 Triumph TR3 2:14.315
- 1 DP T. Drews/1963 Triumph TR4 2:16.582
- 1 FP J. Hovey/1967 Triumph Spitfire 2:16.583
- 2 FP D. Vick/1964 Triumph Spitfire
- 2 DP R. Blake/1963 Triumph TR4
- 1 VB R. Noyes-Smith/ Triumph TR3 2:33.090
- 1 GP R. Mackenzie/1962 Triumph Spitfire 4 2:36.402
- 3 FP B. Collins/1972 Triumph Spitfire
- 3 DP B. Kramer/1966 Triumph TR4A
- 1 CS J. Barker/1963 Triumph Herald 2:16.711
- 4 DP J. Frymark/1967 Triumph TR4A



photo by Paul Flores

#61 Rex McDaniel, 1965 BMC Mini Cooper.

- 2 AS H. Hilton/1967 Ford Mustang
 - 3 AS B. Whitehead/1965 Ford Mustang
 - 4 AS G. Hassell/1968 Ford Mustang
 - 5 AS T. Hassell/1966 Ford Mustang
 - 6 AS J. Sharp/1971 Camaro
- GROUP 2**
PL CL DRIVER/CAR
1 EP S. Brady/1972 Fiat Abarth 124

- 1 FP P. Sandy/1959 Austin Healey Sprite
- 2 FP C. Duroy/1968 MG Midget



photo by Paul Flores

#46 Tom O'Grady, 1964 Merlyn Mk 6A.

- 3 FP T. Bond/1971 MG Midget
- 4 FP S. Knight/1968 MG Midget
- 5 FP J. Walker/1961 Austin Healey Sprite
- 2 EP K. Morris/1969 MGB
- 1 FP2 J. Norris/1972 MG Midget
- 6 FP M. Briggs/
- 3 EP T. Welsh/1974 MGB
- 4 EP M. Baker/1963 MGB
- 7 FP P. Glawe/1966 Austin Healey Sprite
- 8 FP G. Reed/1967 MG Midget
- 5 EP R. Reed/1972 Porsche 914
- 1 CS B. Pinkston/1966 VW Beetle
- 9 FP P.D. Sohn/1972 MG Midget

GROUP 3

PL CL DRIVER/CAR

- 1 FV D. Calkins/1972 Lynx B 2:13.603
- 2 FV B. Griffith/1969 Warrior
- 3 FV G. Byrne/1971 Zink FV
- 4 FV D. Harrison/1965 Zink C-4
- 5 FV M. Rogers/1965 Autodynamics FV
- 6 FV W. Wolff/1965 Zink C-4
- 7 FV S. Smith/1968 Zink FV
- 8 FV L. Thacker/1972 Autodynamics Caldwell D-13

GROUP 4

PL CL DRIVER/CAR

- 1 CM A. Johnson/1959 Devin Healey 2:17.519

- 1 VA E. Zwickey/1965 Ginetta G4 2:15.775

- 1 VB H. Morrison/1959 Elva Courier 2:21.763
- 2 VB H. Noble/1962 MGA Mk II
- 3 VB L. Marchant/1959 MGA
- 1 SFP W. Wigginton/1972 MG Midget 2:25.112
- 2 SFP D. Turner/1964 A-H Sprite
- 2 VA F. Crowley/1962 A-H 3000

GROUP 6

PL CL DRIVER/CAR

- 1 FF2 S. Clark/1979 Lola T540 1:57.729
- 2 FF2 M. Bond/1975 Legrand Mk 21
- 1 FFI S. Lafferty/1971 Merlyn Mk 20 2:03.523
- 1 FA R. Rodgers/1980 Abarth 33 2:13.041



photo by Malinda Julien

#08 Ken Morris, 1969 MGB.

GROUP 7

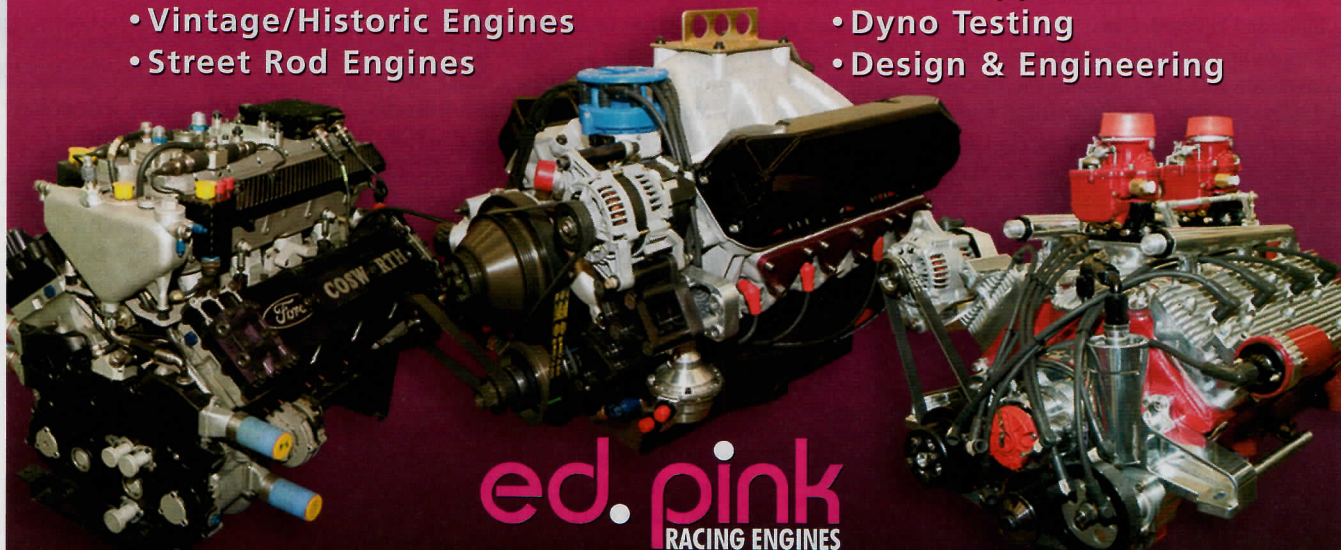
PL CL DRIVER/CAR

- 1 S. Duplissey/1971 Porsche 911T 2:02.797
- 2 R. Reeves/1972 Porsche 911
- 3 B. Merrill/1971 Datsun 240Z
- 4 M. Hanna/1969 Porsche 911S 2:13.308
- 1 L. Gladfelter/1971 Datsun 510 2:13.308
- 2 C. Triflio/1971 Fiat 124 Coupe
- 3 D. Gwynne/1970 English Ford Escort
- 5 M. Hanna/1970 Porsche 914/6
- 6 D. Piott/1972 Porsche 914/6

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