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SVRA at Watkins Glen

**Lime Rock
Historic
Festival 32
Lime Rock Park, CT**



HCICA at Auto Club Speedway, CA



#121 Stephen Frank, 1969 Austin Healey Sprite; #776 Derek Vick, 1964 Triumph Spitfire.

CVAR Fall Drivers School & Races

Texas World Speedway

September 12-14, 2014

*– story and photos
by Don Gwynne*

The Fall Drivers School & Races at TWS enjoyed good weather but had a smaller turnout (approx. 120 cars) than the record entry seen last February. Friday was “test, tune & practice” day for the experienced drivers, and a day of education for the student class.

CVAR sees development of new vintage racing drivers as its most important responsibility. Every student must attend every “chalk talk” session, no excuses accepted. On-track sessions are supervised by experienced CVAR instructors. Each student’s car is subjected to a rigorous safety inspection; full compliance with CVAR’s vintage-correct car preparation rules can be partially overlooked the first time out, but safety provisions cannot. In addition, before receiving a license, CVAR students must spend a day working with a

corner station crew, in order to fully appreciate how much all drivers depend on the workers for their safety.

The Fall 2014 Student Class enrollment included: Dustin Nicholson, purple Triumph Spitfire #4; Scott Pinkston, red VW Beetle #7; Glenn Bilawsky, blue/black Austin Healey Sprite #9; Joe Robau, blue/red Bigger Hammer FV #24; Eric Lovay, red/white/blue Bigger Hammer FV #36; Donald Gibson, yellow Royale RP-16 #54; Terrance Swonke, white MG Midget #55; Chris Meyer, blue/white/yellow Bigger Hammer FV #66; Jackson Williams, green Austin Healey Sprite #72; Randy Riney, red Austin Healey Sprite #107; Kirby Schrader, red/black DeTomaso Pantera #449; Brad Hilton, red MG Midget #02; Mike Jones, blue Nash Scrambler FV #04; Robert Mulderrig, yellow/black BMW 2002 #07.

Unfortunately, Don Gibson’s Royale RP-16 Formula Ford wasn’t quite ready in time, so he didn’t make the school. Coincidentally, he reminded your forgetful author that we sat next to each other at the excellent Race Driving and Car Setup Seminar presented by Doc Bundy and Robert Metcalf back on June 14th at Metcalf Racing in Garland, Texas.

Student Joe Robau was hoping to attend the school in his grey 1964 Corvette, but it wasn’t quite ready. Instead, he rented a Formula Vee from Bill Griffith’s Bigger Hammer Racing. In his own words, Joe had an absolute ball, and found himself giddy and giggling inside his helmet

as he drove the FV around TWS. He was highly complementary of the entire Bigger Hammer support team, especially Derrick, his crew chief. “There was nothing I needed that Derrick didn’t get right on.”

Eric Lovay drove the school in a Caldwell Bigger Hammer FV. Although he has driven in driver education (DE) events in the past, this was his first vintage racing school experience. Eric’s father is Mike Lovay, who is already racing a B Sedan Datsun 510 with CVAR. Eric hopes to own a certain Caldwell FV soon.

Truck driver Glenn Bilawsky drove the school in his own blue/black Sprite. He commented that the CVAR school was very well structured, but for the future, he recommends more lead-follow practice before allowing the beginning drivers to race each other.

Chris Meyer was a third Bigger Hammer FV driver, and he enjoyed this school experience. He had no prior racing experience, but generally did well and had a lot of fun. He said that it didn’t take long to learn that in a lightweight rear-engined car, lifting off the throttle in the middle of a corner was likely to lead to a spin. He hopes to try a closed wheel car next, before making a purchasing decision of his first race car.

Katy, Texas resident Dustin Nicholson drove his purple Triumph Spitfire in the school. Other than a lot of little things breaking on an old race car, his weekend went well. He was an autocrosser about a decade ago, and has driven in 24 Hours of Lemons before.

This was Scott Pinkston’s first driver’s school, and he was sharing a red VW Beetle



#161 Gary Perser, 1966 MGB.

with his brother Bob for the weekend. Scott drove it in the school on Friday, then Bob drove it some on Saturday, and Scott drove it again on Sunday. At some point during the weekend, a rocker screw problem resulted in a bent valve, but it kept on ticking. Bob, Scott and Danny Piott are preparing three similar C Sedan VW Beetles, one red, one white, and one blue. They are anticipating some interesting and patriotic finish line photos. While Beetles are not always the fastest C Sedans in the field, everyone loves seeing them compete.



#14 Robert Blake, 1963 Triumph TR4; #98 David McCullough, 1971 Datsun 1200.

Kirby Schrader attended all the chalk-talk classes on Friday and did five of the on-track sessions just fine. During his sixth on-track session, he spun off the track at Turn 3. Kirby later wrote "I didn't know what happened initially. The car just let go... a corner worker asked me if I was OK and I said yes, but I didn't know what happened! She said, I do! Look behind you! You spun in your own oil. Sure enough, oil all over the firewall and passenger side floor. Turns out the engine dropped the #5 exhaust valve, trashed the piston, cracked the block and wreaked general havoc..." With no car to drive on Saturday, Kirby spent all day at the Turn 3 corner station. He continued... "The corner worker experience was excellent. I learned a lot of things that I didn't know! The school went well. I found the short on-track sessions and the chalk-talk classes were a little hectic to get back and forth from. I was parked out on the drag strip with Tom Upton, so thanks to my



#41 Greg Blake, 1985 Triumph TR2.

arose with the green #72 Sprite he entered the school with, he was able to switch to the orange #66 Sprite to finish the weekend. His father had worked long and hard to resurrect a purple Bugeye to drive, and Jackson was delighted that CVAR let Roger serve as his driving instructor.

Saturday morning was wet at first, but the Texas skies relented and the rest of the weekend's racing was in the dry. Sunday afternoon started off with a non-points race for the Group 5 students. Randy Riney started on pole position and led the first four laps, but Glenn Bilawsky caught and passed him to lead the last three laps for the win, with both in "Spridgets." Robert Mulderrig moved up from a fifth place grid position to finish third in his yellow

BMW 2002. Brad Hilton, son of CVAR President Herb Hilton, finished fourth in Hilton's familiar #02 red MG Midget.

The first points race on Sunday afternoon involved CVAR's **GROUP 7** cars (C Production and B Sedan). San Antonio's Skip Duplissey made it look easy, starting on pole and leading every lap in his green #71 Porsche 911T. There was a bit more action farther back in the pack. Richard Reeves pulled his green #78 Porsche 911 out and around Jim Collier's white #66 Porsche 911 (beginning to see a pattern here, aren't you?) on the first lap, and that is how they finished. CVAR's Chief Instructor, Berkeley Merrill, started in fourth with his silver and red #4 Datsun 240Z, but his car faltered on the second lap and he dropped out of contention. Steve Smargiasso and Dan Hightower kept their own Datsun 240Z cars in the fray, with Steve's white and black #37 Z-car moving up from a seventh place grid spot to finish fourth overall and fourth in C

Production, and Dan's blue Z-car finishing just behind him. Michael Lovay had a good outing with his red-white-blue #57 Datsun 510, finishing seventh overall to take the B Sedan class win. Cynthia Trifilio finished eighth overall for a second place in B Sedan driving her blue #55 Fiat 124 Sport Coupe.

CVAR's big thunder rolled out next. A strong field of 19 **GROUP 1** cars (A Production, B Production, A Sedan, and FIA class) took the green flag. Polesitter Jim Caudle led the first couple of laps in his silver #27 Corvette, but George Kopecky reeled him in by the third lap in his black #97 Porsche RSR and held on to take the overall win and the FIA class win. Caudle won A Production with his second overall finish. Local College Station driver Michael Saxe finished third overall and second in FIA class with his orange Porsche 911 Carrera RS. Charlie Jones had a rough day after starting on the outside of the front row in his red #9 Mustang and dropped to the tail of the pack by the third lap. Stephen Seitz drove his #10 Mustang to the B Production class win in fourth overall. Scott Walton had a brilliant drive in his maroon #15 Mustang, starting in thirteenth on the grid, working his way up to



#57 Michael Lovay, 1969 Datsun 510.

son-in-law, by the time I'd get back from the classroom, he'd have my car fueled, checked and ready."

Mike Jones attended the September TWS school to knock off seven years of rust and reinstate his vintage racing license. He recently purchased a rather historic FV, the Nash Scrambler. Under the current blue paint, Mike found evidence of the original dark green shown in color photos of the car taken at TWS and Green Valley in the early '70s. This survivor car has an interesting history. Its constructor Weldon Nash wrote all about it at <http://formulavee50th.blogspot.com/2011/11/nash-scambler-formula-vee.html>. Jones said that he got a lot of much-appreciated technical help from Bigger Hammer's Bill Griffith regarding some transmission and carburation gremlins, and lots of good driving advice from Berkeley Merrill, CVAR's Chief Instructor.

After growing up watching his father Roger Williams race, and years of working corners and grids, Jackson Williams finally took the plunge and entered CVAR's September school. Jackson mostly put himself through college working corners for CVAR and SCCA, often travelling to work races two weeks of each month. After some mechanical troubles



#84 Jim Sandberg, 1969 Corvette.

lead Seitz by the fourth lap, only to get nipped at the checkered flag by Seitz by less than 0.3 seconds. Walton thus finished fifth overall to win the A Sedan Class.

Not to be outdone, **GROUP 2** (DP, EP, FP and GP) also fielded 19 cars for their final race of the weekend. Chris Duroy took the overall



#49 Kevin Ford, 1969 Camaro; #83 Gene Hassell, 1968 Mustang.

lead on the second lap in his blue MG Midget and held it to the end, winning F Production. Scott Brady moved up from fifth at the start to second overall at the finish, winning E Production in his blue Abarth 124 Spider. Robert Mackenzie took an unopposed G Production class win with an eleventh overall finish in his white #62 Triumph Spitfire. Likewise, Robert Blake (sort of) enjoyed an unopposed D Production win driving the red #14 Triumph TR-4 notwithstanding completion of only four laps.

The Formula Vees of **GROUP 3** made up the largest starting grid of the afternoon, with 21 cars coming under the Starter's orders. And predictably, it was a real fur ball from start to finish. Greg Byrne started on pole in his red Zink, with Bigger Hammer Racing's

Byrne finished second, about 1.6 seconds behind Griffith. Ed Ziegler came in third, about 15 seconds back, in his red #5 Beach.

CVAR's **GROUP 4** (VA, VB, VC, CM and SFP) was one of the smaller grids of the afternoon. Nine cars started, and all finished. Jack McClanahan led all but lap #4 in his green and white #104 Austin Healey 100-4 to win the VB class. It was Allen Johnson who briefly challenged Jack for the overall lead on the fourth lap, after starting seventh on the grid. Johnson then faded to eventually finish back where he started in seventh overall, but taking the C Modified class win nonetheless. Hank Noble and Lou Marchant, both driving MGAs, had a good scrap, swapping the lead several times before Hank's silver #36A finished second overall and second VB

ahead of Marchant's BRG #186 car. Louis Gladfelter's #58 Corvette finished fourth overall to win VA class, but only after chasing Christel Kuehnhoefer's white #61 Alfa Romeo Spider Veloce for the first five laps. Christel finished fifth overall and fourth in VB. Wes Wigginton won the SFP "Spec Sprite" class in his lime green #77 MG Midget. Gary McFarlane won VC class driving his one-of-a-kind white #91 "Thundermug" (Crosley-powered H-Modified).

The last race of the weekend was also a small grid, with nine **GROUP 6** cars (FA, FF1, BSR). Tom Murphy's red #180 March was clearly dominant, with pole position, fastest lap, and a flag-to-flag overall win and FA class win. Behind Murphy, Greg Hibbs was similarly in charge of FF1 class, starting on the outside of the front row, and running in second overall all race long to win the FF1 class driving his white and black Merlyn Mk20A. Lee Lydick drove his yellow #22 Merlyn Mk6A to the B Sports Racing class win.

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#7 Scott Pinkston, 1970 VW Beetle.

**GROUP 5/STUDENTS
PL CL DRIVER/CAR**

- 1 S G. Bilawsky/1969 Austin Healey Sprite 2:08.169
- 1 FP R. Riney/1972 MG Midget 2:07.637
- 2 S R. Mulderrig/1974 BMW 2002
- 3 S B. Hilton/1971 MG Midget
- 4 S D. Nicholson/1971 Triumph Spitfire
- 5 S T. Swonke/1967 MG Midget
- 2 FP J. Williams/1966 Austin Healey Sprite
- 6 S S. Pinkston/1970 Volkswagen Beetle

GROUP 7

PL CL DRIVER/CAR

- 1 CP S. Duplissey/1971 Porsche 911T 1:59.136
- 2 CP R. Reeves/1972 Porsche 911
- 3 CP J. Collier/1972 Porsche 911
- 4 CP S. Smargiasso/1972 Datsun 240Z
- 5 CP D. Hightower/1972 Datsun 240Z
- 6 CP T. Taff/1971 Porsche 914/6
- 1 BS M. Lovay/1969 Datsun 510 2:07.414
- 2 BS C. Trifilio/1971 Fiat 124 Coupe
- 7 CP J. Iturbe/1972 Porsche 911
- 3 BS R. Rosenberg/1975 BMW 2002
- 8 CP J. Sommer/1972 Datsun 240Z
- 9 CP B. Merrill/1971 Datsun 240Z

GROUP 1

PL CL DRIVER/CAR

- 1 FIA G. Kopecky/1973 Porsche RSR 1:54.971
- 1 AP J. Caudle/1969 Corvette 1:55.486
- 2 FIA M. Saxe/1974 Porsche 911 Carrera
- 1 BP S. Seitz/1965 Mustang 1:58.590
- 1 AS S. Walton/1970 Mustang 1:58.938
- 2 AS J. Fershtand/1969 Ford Mustang
- 3 AS R. Hunter/1967 Ford Mustang
- 4 AS K. Ford/1969 Camaro
- 5 AS J. Sharp/1971 Camaro
- 2 AP J. Sandberg/1969 Corvette
- 6 AS J. Seligman/1966 Mustang
- 7 AS R. Cobb/1968 Mustang
- 8 AS C. Lemmons/1965 Mustang
- 9 AS B. Whitehead/1965 Mustang
- 10 AS H. Hilton/1967 Mustang
- 2 BP B. Kuers/1965 Mustang
- 11 AS T. Hassell/1966 Mustang Notchback



#22 John Sommer, 1972 Datsun 240Z.

GROUP 2

PL CL DRIVER/CAR

- 1 FP C. Duroy/1970 MG Midget 2:05.351
- 1 EP S. Brady/1972 Fiat Abarth 124 Spyder 2:05.578
- 2 FP J. Hovey/1967 Triumph Spitfire
- 3 FP D. Littlefield/1968 MG Midget
- 2 EP G. Blake/1958 Triumph Tr3
- 3 EP K. Morris/1969 MG B
- 4 EP J. Jones/1972 MG B

- 4 FP S. Knight/1962 MG Midget
- 5 FP W. Miles/1961 Austin Healey Sprite
- 5 EP M. Baker/1963 MG B
- 1 GPR S. Mackenzie/1962 Triumph Spitfire 4 2:25.556
- 6 FP D. Vick/1964 Triump Spitfire



#419 Ronald Reed, 1972 Porsche 914.

- 7 FP R. Fisher/1959 Austin Healey Sprite
- 8 FP M. Briggs/1972 MG Midget
- 1 DPR B. Blake/1963 Triumph TR4 2:19.409

GROUP 3

PL CL DRIVER/CAR

- 1 FV B. Griffith/1969 Warrior 2:07.321
- 2 FV G. Byrne/1971 Zink FV
- 3 FV E. Ziegler/1967 Beach 5C
- 4 FV M. Rogers/1965 Autodynamics FV
- 5 FV M. Callahan/1968 Zink Z-5
- 6 FV D. Peterson/1972 Zink Danenhauer
- 7 FV N. Baldauff/1969 Beach 5C
- 8 FV A. Acemyan/1969 Beach 5C
- 9 FV B. Liming/1968 Zink C-4
- 10 FV E. Barron/1963 Kellison Phoenix
- 11 FV R. Weingartner/1968 Beach 5C
- 12 FV J. Robau/1993 Bhr FV
- 13 FV W. Murphey/1966 Zink FV
- 14 FV D. Rolison/1967 Zink Z-5
- 1 S E. Lovay/1970 VW Formula 2:18.859
- 15 FV D. Calkins/1972 Lynx B
- 2 S C. Meyer/1972 MG Midget
- 16 FV F. Brock/1967 Zink C-4 FV
- 17 FV S. Smith/1968 Zink FV

- 18 FV B. Wright/1964 Zink FV
- 3 S M. Jones/1968 Nash Scramble FV

GROUP 4

PL CL DRIVER/CAR

- 1 VB J. McClanahan/1955 Austin Healey 100-4 2:14.575
- 2 VB H. Noble/1962 MG MGA Mk II
- 3 VB L. Marchant/1959 MG A
- 1 VA L. Gladfelter/1958 Corvette 2:18.816
- 4 VB C. Kuehnhoefer/1965 Alfa Romeo Spider Veloce
- 1 SFP W. Wigginton/1972 MG Midget 2:19.072
- 1 CM A. Johnson/1959 Devin Healey 2:13.272
- 1 VC G. McFarlane/1960 H-Mod Thundermug 2:25.070
- 2 SFP D. Turner/1964 AH Sprite



#47 Richard Fisher, 1959 Austin Healey Sprite.

GROUP 6

PL CL DRIVER/CAR

- 1 FA T. Murphy/1980 March FA 1:51.858
- 1 FF1 G. Hibbs/1972 Meryln 20 A 1:58.447
- 2 FF1 M. Hibbs/1969 Merlyn Mk 11a
- 3 FF1 L. Reyburn/1971 Merlyn Mk 20A
- 4 FF1 P. Hardsteen/1968 Lotus 51
- 1 BSR L. Lydick/1963 Merlyn Mk 6A 2:05.501
- 5 FF1 J. Carr/1969 Caldwell FF
- 2 FA R. Rodgers/1980 Abarth 33
- 6 FF1 J. Jard/1969 Ford Hawke FF