

Triumph Newsletter



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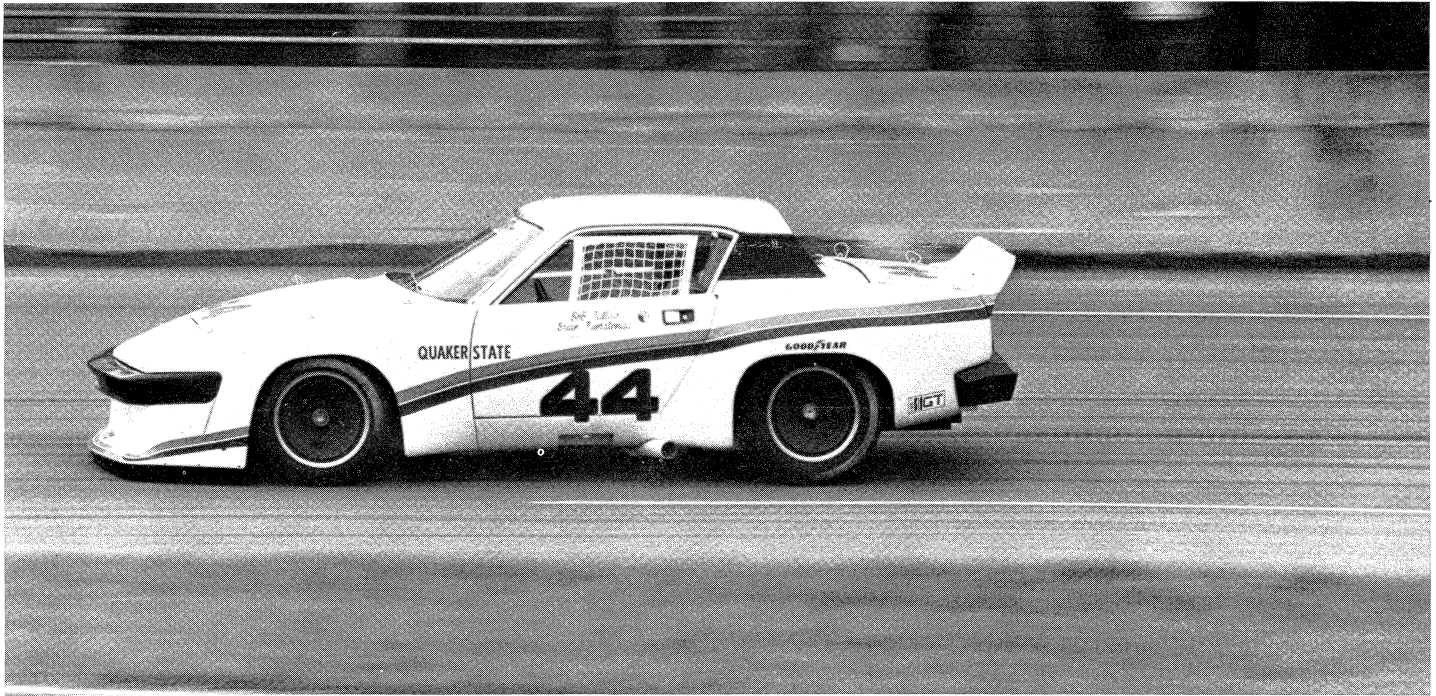
TRIUMPH SPORTS OWNERS ASSOCIATION



VOLUME 25, NUMBER 6

600 WILLOW TREE ROAD • LEONIA, NEW JERSEY 07605

DECEMBER, 1979



The peak speed of 178 mph was obtained by the 325 bhp TR8 Trans-Am/IMSA race car on the finishing straight, during a practice run last November.

World's Fastest Triumph!

Bob Tullius' V8 coupe reaches 178 mph at Daytona Speedway

This lively account of how the experimental Triumph TR8 (modified for IMSA class racing) reached over 170 mph is written by Steve Nickless. Steve has written several pieces before for Triumph Newsletter in his capacity as public relations manager for the Group 44 racing team from Virginia. For 1980, he has taken on a new assignment based in Santa Ana, California, as executive editor of a new monthly magazine in the after market area titled "Import Automotive—Parts & Accessories." We wish him and the new publication all the best for 1980.

* * *

"I can answer that without hesitation," famed racing driver Bob Tullius replied to the question posed by the motorsports correspondent for the Daytona Beach JOURNAL. "The Daytona International Speedway is the most magnificent facility in this country."

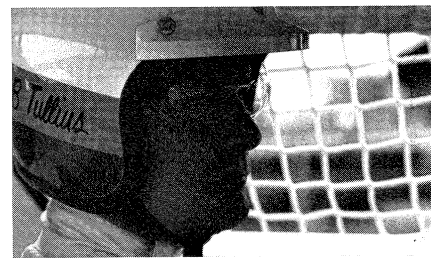
Tullius was in the hot-seat on this occasion—in more ways than one. Here in Florida with his Quaker State/Group 44 team for the Thanksgiving weekend finale of the

International Motor Sports Association's 1979 Winston GT series, Tullius was pursued by the local media. His Virginia-based team had scored an impressive four victories in five starts with its wedge-shaped Triumph TR8 coupe, but the car had not yet sampled a course with Daytona's tremendous horsepower requirements. An upset, the local press believed, was in the cards.

Most racers, Tullius included, acknowledge "the Speedway" as a circuit to be treated with respect. Its 24-degree East and West bankings are no longer the most severe in the country, but, to a casual observer pondering their grade from below, they loom an unscalable mountain of concrete. Webbed between is an eight-turn, ribbon-like road course, featureless, perhaps, to veterans of Laguna Seca and Watkins Glen but a stiff challenge to the engineers who make racing cars perform.

"A successful race at Daytona requires a successful compromise," says Group 44 crew chief Lanky Foushee. "The car really wants two completely differing chassis set-ups to

World's Fastest Triumph—178mph! (Continued)



A cockpit view of Bob Tullius, Group 44's team leader (above and left) at Daytona where he put up such high speeds. Strapped in his 6-point harness, he is checking the console of switches on the 'passenger' side—for ignition, starter, fuel pump, differential oil cooler, wipers, etc.

The roll cage, window net and headrest are racing requirements. A TR7 padded steering wheel boss has been neatly adapted as headrest. Knob at driver's right is fire extinguisher activator, which sprays engine, trunk and under fascia.

cope with both the banking and the infield. And it *really* needs horsepower.”

The engineering challenge and the demands placed on a driver excited Tullius and his entourage. Although the TR8 had never turned wheels in anger on a tricky combination high bank/road course, the team had keenly anticipated the November 25th event. “The Corvettes and Camaros in our class have twice the displacement and almost twice the horsepower,” engine-man Brian Fuerstenau explained, “but we have vastly superior aerodynamics. We'll be there!”

He was quickly proven correct. Both Tullius and the Triumph were pitched into the fray as the first practice session began on a crisp, cool Friday morning. The goal: to match the 1 minute 58.6 second best-ever lap time set by the 525 hp V-12 Jaguar XJ-S in 1978—an unlikely feat, it

appeared, to an outsider aware that the TR8 coupe had four fewer cylinders and 175 less horsepower.

On that day, the TR8 turned a best lap of 1:59.1. On Sunday morning, just hours before the start of the 225-mile race, Tullius clocked a shattering 1:57.9, averaging over 115 mph, as he steamed around the 3.84-mile circuit.

Those numbers pale, however, against the fact that on those Sunday morning laps the tiny TR8 was hitting 178 mph in the shadow of the start/finish grandstands/

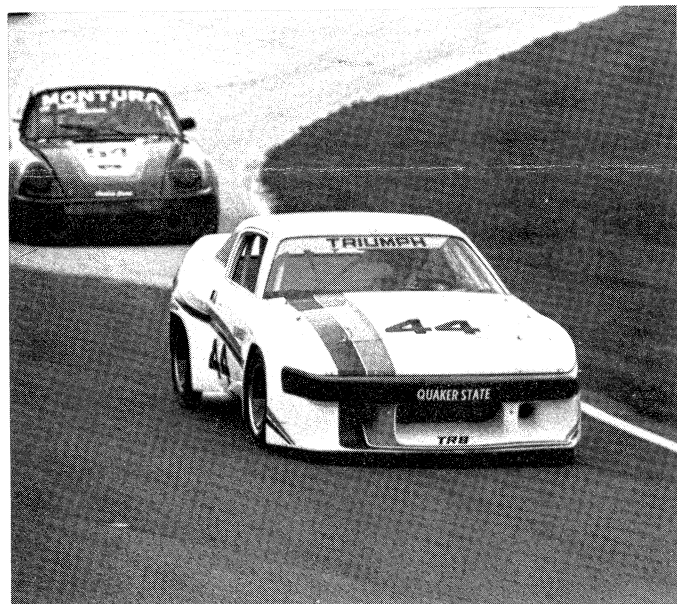
The race itself was almost anticlimactic. Tullius was sidelined in a collision with the unobservant pilot of a slower car while battling tooth and nail with a Camaro for the class lead. (In a sport where such incidents are commonplace, it is interesting to note that this was Bob's first such retirement since early in 1976, almost 50 races before.) The event itself was cut short by a freak Florida rainstorm which triggered a massive 14-car pileup on the back straight.

“Glad I wasn't tangled up in that,” reflected a surprisingly-cheerful Tullius after the race. “I'm perhaps not as disappointed in the result as I should be 'cause I'm elated over how well the TR8 ran down here.

“The shape of the car is very, very good from an aerodynamic standpoint. That was our advantage. Geez, I could steer it with one finger, it was that easy to control.”

The Group 44 team has thoughts of returning to Daytona Beach in February for the grueling 24-Hour event, and, says Tullius, “With just a bit of winter development the car can break the 180 mph barrier.”

Now *that* would be an engineering *Triumph* . . .!



The Daytona circuit has eight turns on the road section, with East and West banking on the oval track, all within 3.84 miles. Bob's TR8, seen here ahead of a Porsche, lapped in 1m. 57.9s. or 115 mph. This is a faster lap than with the over 500 bhp Trans-Am Jaguar XJ-S V-12 last year.

**TRIUMPH TR8 SCORE SHEET 1979
IN TRANS-AM AND IMSA RACES, USA**

1st—Watkins Glen Trans-Am, 96.34 mph (July 7)

1st—Watkins Glen Trans-Am, 97.21 mph (Aug. 5)

1st—Road America IMSA GTO, 96.87 mph (Sept. 2)

2nd—Road Atlanta IMSA GTO (Sept. 22)

1st—Laguna Seca Trans-Am, 96.9 mph (Oct. 14)

*DNF—Daytona IMSA GTO (Nov. 25)

(*Did not finish, as sidelined by collision with slower car, when contesting the lead)

The Sport

Triumph's World of Motor Sport



by Visor

Well, those high performance rally championships came piling in again for Triumph at the end of 1979. Triumph cars were the winners of the NARRA Challenge (for manufacturers) which Dave Ash runs with Montgomery Ward Auto Club sponsorship; and this success incidentally was helped by Jon Woodner's promising debut as a TR8 rallyist, since his second place in one rally helped to up John Buffum's own score.

Then John himself won the driver's title in the SCCA Pro Rally series; and his co-driver Doug Shepherd tied for first in the co-driver category for NARRA.

Opinion is that the 1979 Rally season was the most competitive to date, and all concerned deserve congratulations. John ran 19 rallies, finished 13 and in total he's now won four SCCA championships. In the NARRA events, Triumph's main competition came from such as Datsun, Fiat and Plymouth. John has given Triumph Newsletter a nice Profile about the great support he got from his service crew, led by "Salty" Sottolano. (p. 36).



Guess What?

Can you identify these two classic Triumph cars? For answer, see page 38.

Triumph Detroiters Win Autocross Championship

On Saturday November 17, the Motor Sports Page of "The Detroit News" was dominated by a lead article and three column photo of Detroit Triumph Sports Car Club activities.

The photo was of Gilbert Parker's GT6 competing in the 1979 Autocross championship of the Detroit Council of Sports Car Clubs, at Pine Knob. Gil, who is director of the DTSCC, tells us that his club captured the team championship and won most class titles (six out of 18 for men and two out of 7 for women) in the 14 autocrosses sponsored in 1979 by eight member clubs.

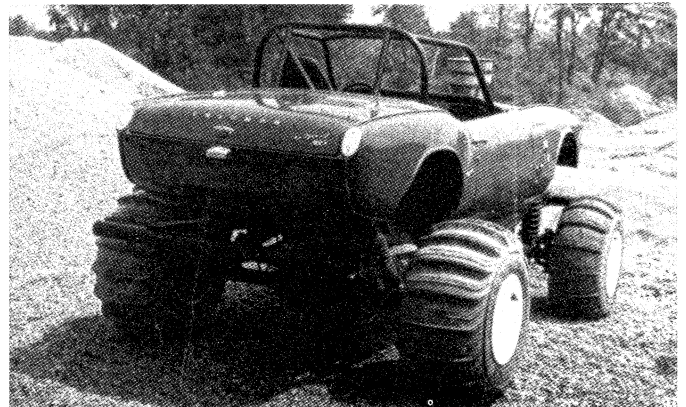
The Triumph club includes all makes of British-built sports cars and they were up against such as the Corvette Club of Michigan (7 wins), the SCC of Michigan and the Alfa Romeo Club (4 each) plus the SCCA Detroit Region (2). Thanks to Detroit News staff writer Joe Dowall for a good story!

New Jersey Club to Run 11 Rallies

Our old friend Jack Griffie, who is a professional newspaperman writing about motor sports for such as "The Passaic Herald News," has sent us the January issue of the newsletter "Triumph Trivia" which he is now editing for the Triumph Sports Car Club of New Jersey. This NJ club has got away to a fast start with the election of five officers and seven directors for 1980. The leader, as President, is Anna Andrews of Little Falls, who—in what is called "an old-fashioned rough and tumble election"—won by a landslide, although six people vied for the top job.

Anna's officers are Peter Schneider, of Cedar Grove (vice-president); Emil Lavagno of Lake Hiawatha (recording secretary); Paul Napolitano of Union City (corresponding secretary); and Barbara Bailey of Rahway (treasurer).

The new president introduced an eleven TSD-Gimmick rallye schedule for 1980 from February through November. Should be a lively season. For information and details contact Anna Andrews, 2 High Court, Little Falls, N.J. 07424 (201-256-4397).



Funny Spit! Did you spot this extraordinary vehicle in a recent issue of *Motor Trend*? It's a "sand drag car" adapted from a "stocker." Basis is a shortened Ford Bronco frame with a modified Boss 302 engine. The body is a Triumph Spitfire Mk3 with roll cage. And it's not from California either. Jim Bies of Chelsea, Michigan, created it.

Tribute To An Unsung Hero

Triumph's Rally Champion John Buffum tells us about his invaluable service back-up man, "Salty" Sottolano.

When someone asks how rallying differs from racing, about a dozen answers occur to me all at once but one that hardly gets the attention it deserves is the way in which the cars are serviced. When I was racing IMSA full time, I had extensive support at the track. I often had a garage available and we always carried a ton of spare parts.

Rallying is different. A lot different. Rally service crews face problems and conditions that make the pits at Watkins Glen look like the Garden of Eden. To begin with, rallies are headquartered at motels in small towns near the roads the rally will be run on, so there are no pits, just parking lots. No lights. No air-powered tools. No power jacks. Once a rally gets started, we lose all pretense of civilization. During the course of a rally there will be several "service points" which are often no more than wide spots on the road where we can service our car. Often they are quagmires of mud.

Service Crew Function

In order to get the gas, tires, oil, spares, and the like to the service points, every serious team in the country has a service crew. The function of the service crew is to get to the service points ahead of the driver/co-driver and be ready for any contingency that might arise. That might be nothing more than wiping the windscreen and hopping up the fuel. Or it might be a lot more complicated—like re-doing bodywork from an unscheduled brush with a tree, installing new brakes, changing tires, or replacing a major mechanical part (we've changed rear ends, axles, starters, struts, shocks—just about anything changeable).

And chances are that all of this work will be done in dust or mud at two o'clock in the morning in a driving rain or snow. I have really been fortunate the past three seasons to have Jim (Salty) Sottolano—also from Vermont—running my service operation. He is totally dedicated to the preparation of our Triumphs. He also logs over 60,000 miles a year towing the cars to the events. Once I get there, it seems like his job has only begun.

All the final little tinkering has to be done. The carbs have to be jetted and adjusted for the altitude of the rally. Remember, I run events at everything from sea-level to 10,000 feet in the mountains, and from the desert to sub-arctic forests. Then Salty has to load the service van and spend the entire night driving to get to the service points. It isn't unusual for him to drive further during an event than I do.

A mechanic like Salty can also add another dimension to

a rally team—enthusiasm and dedication. I remember a few years ago at POR when the championship was at stake. On the third stage, I overcooked a corner and bought a tree with the left front of the car. By the time I got going again I had slipped to something like 60th place. At the next service point, I was really down and ready to pack it in. Salty just ignored me and set to getting the car ready to go. When he got done with the car, he pulled me to one side and said that he wasn't there to quit and he didn't think I was either.

I wasn't very excited about the prospect of going out again, but decided that I could at least give it a shot. The Triumph performed beautifully. Salty had done a perfect job of fixing everything. The upshot of it was that I finished third overall at the rally and picked up enough points to clinch the SCCA Pro Championship. Later someone wrote that it was one of the best rally drives that they had ever seen. What they didn't know was that if it hadn't been for Salty there might well not have been a drive at all.



Triumph's 1979 Rally champion John Buffum (left with his service chief "Salty" Sottolano (See Profile).

TECHNICAL NOTES

Advice About Winter Storage

Each year Triumph Newsletter receives letters inquiring about how best to store a car during the winter months.

A typical TR6 owner from New York State has written as follows:

"I am presently the owner of a 1974 TR6 that is in nothing less than immaculate, mint, and superior condition. I am also quite pleased and happy with the past 4½ years of ownership. My automobile has 39,000 miles on the odometer, and I am now considering either taking it off the road completely or only using it during the summer months for a total mileage accumulation of 1,000 or 1,200. My intention is to preserve it as a classic British sports car for the future.

If I were to take the car off the road for nine months annually, could you please advise me on any special preparations that I might apply for winter storage; i.e. treatment of finish, chrome, and leather; proper maintenance of crankcase, electrical wires, and tubing."

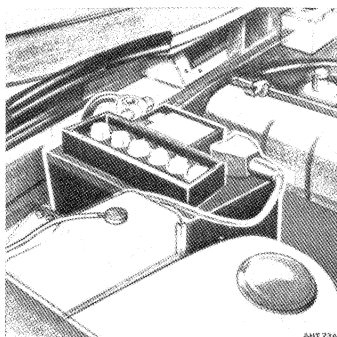
This is what a Triumph Service Engineer recommended for the Concours-condition TR6.

"Storage for nine months will require a considerable amount of work, which does pay off however. The vehicle should be washed and dried thoroughly, top and bottom side, taking particular care that all mud and dirt is removed from the nooks and corners on the underside. The correct amount of anti-freeze should be added to the cooling system. The vehicle should be raised and placed on blocks so wheels are clear of the ground. This will allow activation of the drive train to circulate oil in gearbox and rear end. The wheels and tires should be covered with canvas.

The engine oil should be changed to have clean oil in the crankcase. If the engine is to be run during storage, the ground lead should be removed from the battery; connect only to run engine. When the engine is cool it could be covered with a canvas also to protect alternator, electrical equipment and wiring.

Unless the storage area is very damp, nothing more than a car cover should protect the paint, chrome and interior of your car. One should be sure to remove all covers before starting the vehicle. Periodically run the engine at a fast idle (1250 RPM), for a period of 30 minutes."

* * *



Winter storage, either with the battery connected or removed, is explained here.

Storage During Harsh Winters in the Middle West

A proud owner of a Spitfire wrote from Des Moines: ". . . I am curious about what sort of things I should do for my car when I store it for the winter. Iowa winters are very harsh and I've elected not to drive my Spitfire during the four worst months (Dec thru March). Is there any thing that I should do while I keep it in my garage during this time?"

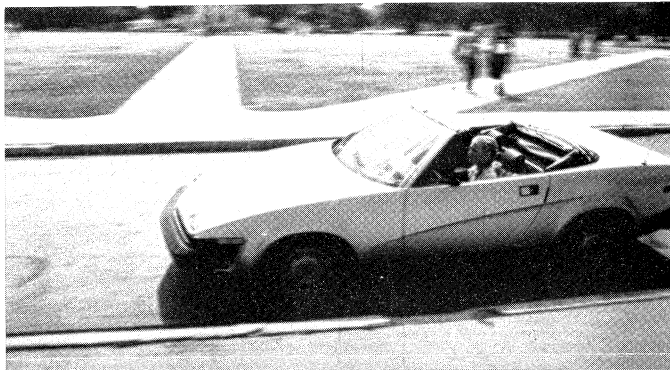
Another service expert drew up a 19-point check list from his own experience as below, but even then suggested that it was not necessarily all-inclusive or in any special sequence.

1. Store indoors in well-closed area to assure non-entry of heavy weather, cats, squirrels, birds, mice, etc.
2. Polish exterior finish and bright parts, touching up any chips. Cover vehicle with soft material cover. Wash underside of vehicle and fenders making sure dirt and road salt is removed from corners.
3. Keep out of direct sunlight to avoid possible fading if vehicle is not covered.
4. Put vehicle up on blocks which are carefully spaced under suspension members, or pump tires to 50 PSI and allow to stand normally.
5. If standing on tires, block both rear wheels, front and rear, to keep vehicle stationary.
6. Release handbrake fully.
7. Block clutch pedal down, using notched 2 x 3 to underside of dash.
8. R & R front wheels and apply very *light* coat of mineral oil to brake discs.
9. Lift wiper blades off glass.
10. Lube door, deck, hood seals with light coat of glycerin—do not get on finish.
11. Change engine oil, filter.
12. Add top oil to fuel—run engine to assure oil gets into valves, etc. (My personal preference would be also to remove spark plugs and squirt some motor oil into cylinders after engine is shut off. Leave plugs loose and make a note to start engine carefully next time.)
13. Prior to final running, flush radiator. Add correct mixture of water/coolant (50% is best unless local conditions get extreme).
14. Cover upholstery to protect from sunshine. Keep direct sunshine off tires also.
15. Close vehicle doors tightly to keep out dust. Close fresh air and heater vents.
16. Remove battery and store indoors. Do not allow battery to freeze. Place battery on trickle charger once a month during winter.
17. Add dry gas to fuel tank. A full fuel tank is less likely to sweat, causing moisture contamination and is less dangerous than a half full tank in terms of fuel evaporation and fumes. Gasoline does not "sour" except if left over a very long period of time. For prolonged storage, fuel should be drained, but deterioration in seals and gaskets must be considered.
18. Lightly coat crank, water pump and alternator pulleys with thin coat of glycerin.
19. Store with cloth top fully up—do not fold.

Answer to "Guess What?" Photos (page 35)

(Top Photo) This is the fine walnut-veneer fascia of a Triumph Gloria Monte Carlo 4-seater of about 1935. Luxury features are the fold-down door tops for more elbow room, a free-wheel control on the gear lever, shock absorbers adjustable from the cockpit and adjustable steering wheel.

(Lower Photo) One of the very rare 6-cylinder Triumph Gloria 2-seater sports, also from the mid-thirties, and one of Triumph's most beautiful sports cars ever. A reader spotted these two on a recent trip to England. There are no examples in the U.S.



TR7 Convertible on TV: The successful new television weekly series "Dallas" features a new Triumph TR7 convertible, which is driven by Charlene Tilton playing Lucy Ewing, the youngest daughter. This is a clip from a recent show.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

A Triumph Newsletter Every Month?

"I enjoy your Newsletter very much but, I believe you should go back to having one every month. I would also like to know if there are any back issues available from 1966-1970, and since being a member of TSOA for more than six years, the number of Triumphs I own has grown from one to four. Two on the road, two off. Two TR4s (1963 & 1964), and two TR250's ('65)."

—John J. Busick, West Park, N.Y.

(There is a division of opinion as to whether readers of Triumph Newsletter would prefer a 4-pager each month or the 6 to 8-pager we send out six times a year. But the latter policy enables us to go into all aspects of Triumph News in much greater depth: also to be flexible in schedule to take in important events such as new model announcements, the SCCA Championships, etc. Comparison with past issues of the monthly TN will show this increase in news coverage. But we're never satisfied and will go on improving the Newsletter.

Some back issues are available (at \$1.00 post free) but only for recent years—Editor.)

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

FOR SALE

2 brand new 185 x 15 Red Band Michelin tires (were spares) \$95.
2 Lucas 15ACR Alternators: 1 like new \$40, the other \$10. TR6 Black Tonneau Cover \$35. TR-3 White Boot Cover \$5. 1 pair TR-3 Ammco Side Vent Windows \$20. 1 New TR6 Grill Emblem \$30.
Contact: Thomas A. Mann, Box 47, Schenectady, N.Y. 12301.

Triumph Sales Literature, Books, Service Manuals, Pictures, Posters, Toys and misc. items. The result of years collecting have overgrown their home: Send stamped self-addressed envelope for complete listing with prices to: Bill Redinger, 12118 Erskine, Omaha, Nebraska 68164—Telephone: 402-496-2006.

Chrome/Stainless Steel Header for TR3. \$50 plus shipping. COD costs (512) 258-9396. Mike Hyde.

TR3 Parts: All parts original factory equipment, unused in original packages. Left and right door side curtain assembly (white/wedge type/sliding window) #553933 and 553934; \$90 each; Boot Lid lock (trunk) #607070, \$25; Front over rider assy. (2) #700911, \$20 each; swing-out under dash ash tray, #701019, \$25; accessory windscreen washer kit #553729, \$25; Rare exhaust extension deflector w/"STANDARD" emblem #506415, \$35; Also, in very good condition—used tonneau cover, factory original, #556032 (white), \$50. J. Garram, 4133 W. Layton Ave., Greenfield, Wisc. 53221, (414) 282-0564.

1975 TR6—21,000 mi—garage kept—stored winters—new clutch, hard top, new tires, many extras. Best offer! Please phone (215) 624-4956—2216 Disston St.—Philadelphia, PA 19149.

1976 TR6 #CF-54700U. Immaculate condition—in storage under cover since new. Never registered. Delft Blue (rare color) w/black interior. Michelin radials, luggage carrier, and manuals. Ziebart protected. Serious inquiries only. Rex Webber, Cape Cod, Mass. 617-428-3710.

One new rim and new Michelin 185 XVS tire for TR7. Also jack set for TR7—both for \$55. Tim Coughlin, 545 Virginia Ave., Erie, Pa. 16505.

1978 Triumph Spitfire, beige bootcover and black tonneau cover. Both are brand new, with metallic snaps. Asking \$50 for the pair. William Zinski, 455 Hulse Avenue, Bricktown, N.J. 08723, (201) 892-7746.

WANTED

New or used factory hardtop for 1972 TR6. Contact Mark Luebke-mann, 33 Hazel Lane, Springfield, Ill. 62703 (217) 529-1936.

TSOA SUPERMARKET

The following items are to be ordered from TSOA Leonia.

Local TSOA Club "Calling Cards"	FREE
List of Triumph Dealers and Distributors	FREE
Replacement TSOA badge	\$2.50
TSOA Handbook, 2nd Edition	\$2.50
Supplement to TSOA Handbook, 1973	\$.75
TR-4/TR-4A Competition Preparation Manual	\$3.00
SPITFIRE 1500 Competition Preparation Manual	\$3.00
TR-250/TR-6 Competition Preparation Manual	\$3.00
GT-6+ Competition Preparation Manual	\$3.00
Competition Parts list (Specify model)	FREE
TSOA Jacket Emblem	\$1.00
(Club Discount—1 Dozen)	\$10.00
Official Triumph Jacket Emblem	\$.50
Triumph Sportscar Champions Jacket Emblem	\$1.00
Competition Stickers, Mylar	2 for \$1.00
Competition Patches (Helmet)	(12 for \$10.00) \$1.00
Triumph history 34-page reprint ("Automobile Quarterly")	\$1.95
"Triumph—50 Years of Sports Car" history poster	\$3.00

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We shall be pleased to consider for publication any reports, photos and results of newsworthy Triumph events submitted by readers. Original articles, illustrations and technical notes will be paid for at our current rates. Six issues are published each year, bi-monthly.

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