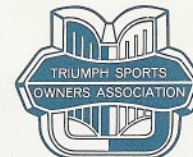




Triumph

T S O A

TRIUMPH SPORTS OWNERS ASSOCIATION



NEWSLETTER

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JUNE, 1974

THE SHORT HAPPY LIFE OF THE SENSATIONAL STRAIGHT EIGHT DOLOMITE (OF 1934)

THEY ONLY BUILT THREE OF TRIUMPH'S MOST EXCITING HISTORIC SPORTS CAR

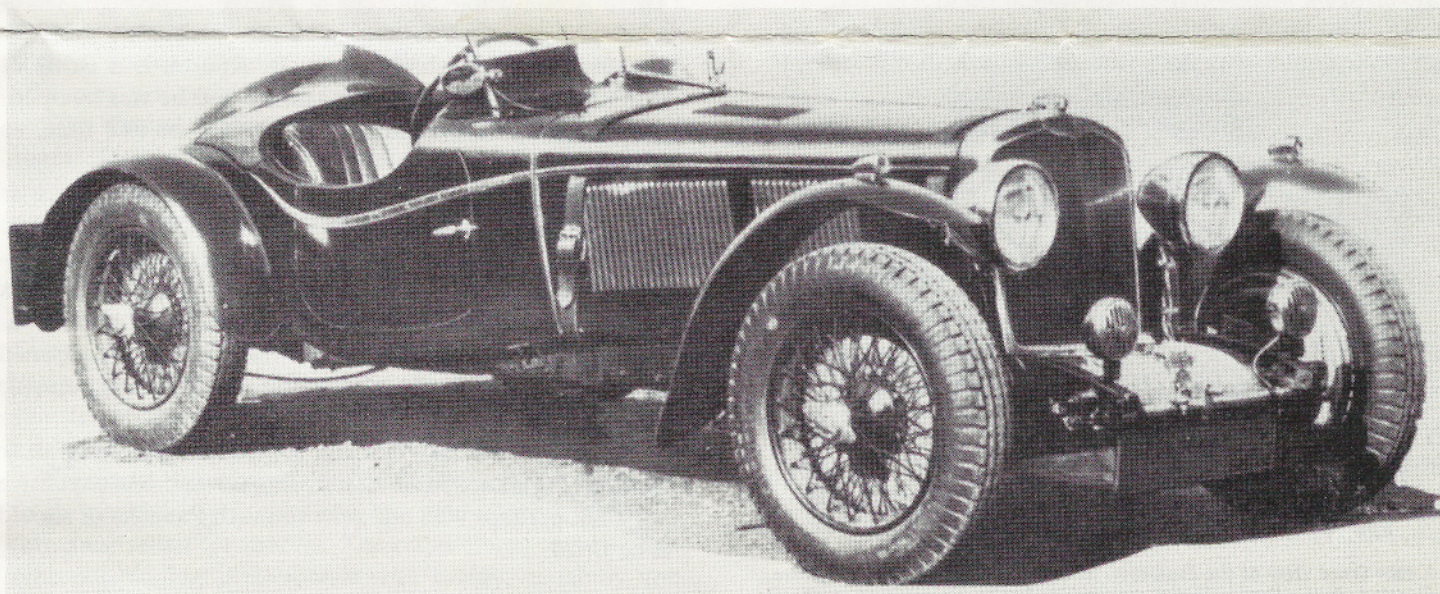
The Thirties were not unlike later decades—even the Seventies. “Why don’t the British build a decent sport car” said the aficionados “like all those exotic Alfa Romeos, Maseratis and things, with double overhead cams, superchargers and whatever . . .” They said it then and they’re saying it still and they will go on saying it. But remember the manufacturer is in business not only to make good cars, but also to make good profits.

This then is a short happy story but with a sad ending. It’s about an imaginative, energetic car constructor who listened sympathetically to the voices of the enthusiasts of his day and tried to do just what they asked. The brave man was Donald Healey who for all his 76 years today has continued to build very special and successful sports cars but who did not quite make it with one of his early attempts 40 years ago.

This was the fabled birth of the Triumph-Alfa (and that might have been its actual name at one moment) in 1934/1935. Healey was in charge of development and competition at Triumph in Coventry when the company decided to build a 2-litre version of the famous 2.3 litre Alfa Romeo supercharged Straight Eights, which had won four LeMans, two T.T.s and the Mille Miglia.

They consulted—according to Healey—with Alfa designer Jano and produced three prototypes. Healey claims Triumph had not only a first class engine drawing office at the time, but also “probably the best tool room in Coventry” and so were well equipped for the job.

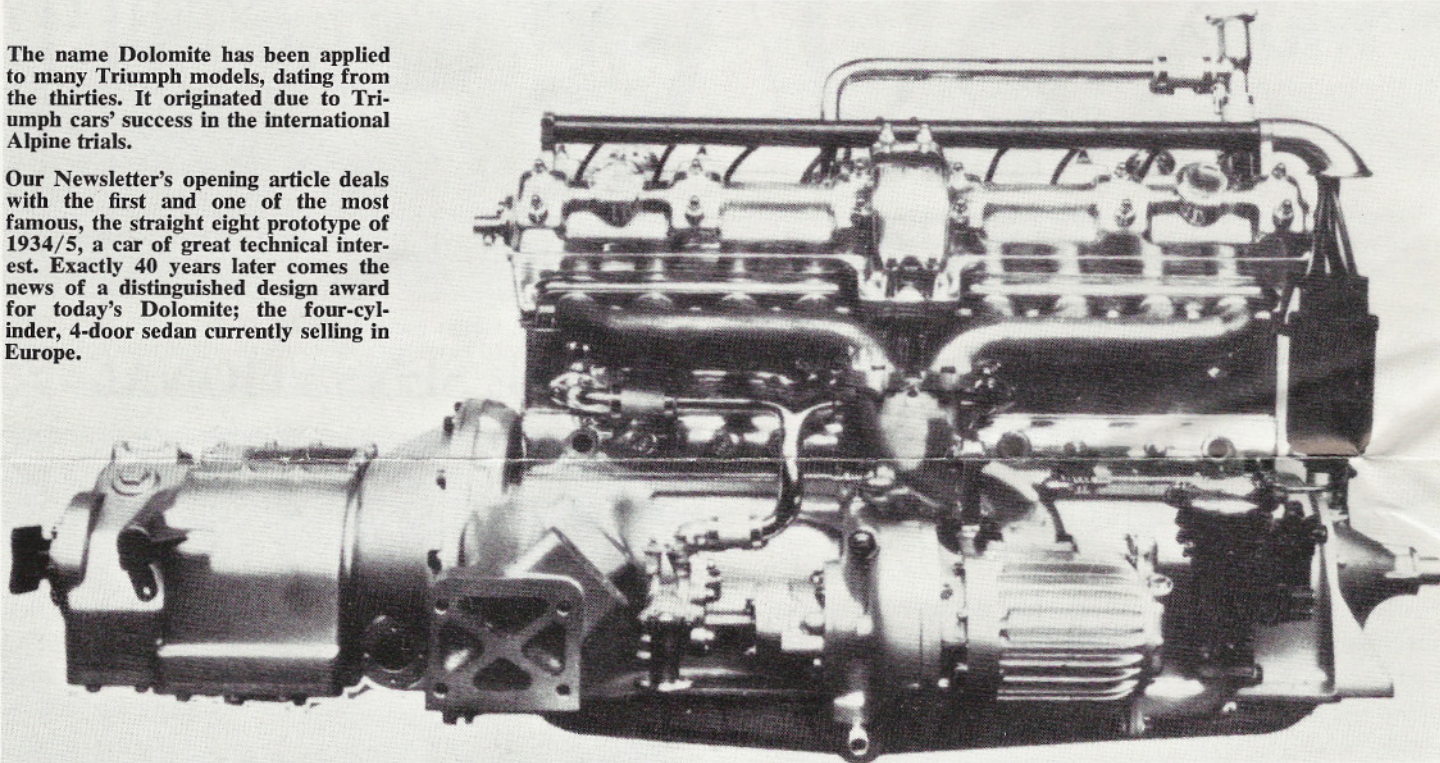
The car was shown at the London motor show at the end of 1934 and Healey drove them through the Monte Carlo rallies of 1935 and 1936. But before they could come into their own, the world financial crisis of that era proved



Very few photographs exist of the 1934/1935 Triumph Dolomite Straight Eight. This is Donald Healey's own competition car with “bicycle mudguards” instead of the long flared fenders intended for the fully styled job.

The name Dolomite has been applied to many Triumph models, dating from the thirties. It originated due to Triumph cars' success in the international Alpine trials.

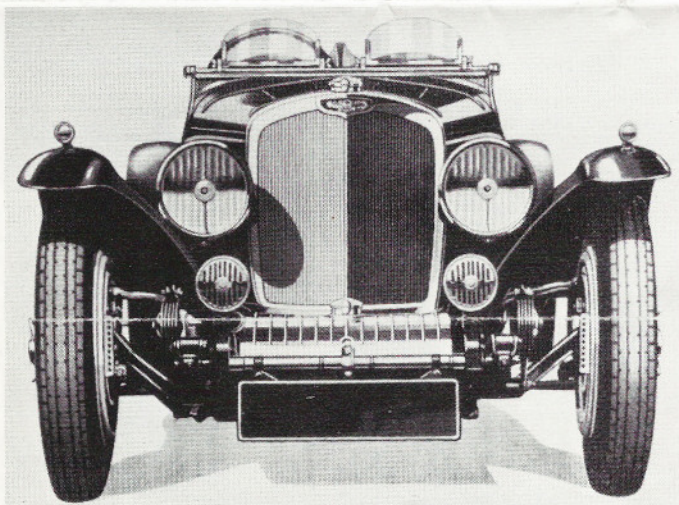
Our Newsletter's opening article deals with the first and one of the most famous, the straight eight prototype of 1934/5, a car of great technical interest. Exactly 40 years later comes the news of a distinguished design award for today's Dolomite; the four-cylinder, 4-door sedan currently selling in Europe.



The Triumph Dolomite engine was a thing of beauty all right, with its eight cylinders arranged in two blocks of four and the twin overhead cam drive up the centre. Roots type blower and preselector gear box were used.

too much for management and the ambitious project was abandoned for more prosaic machines. The Dolomite S8 was a beauty with true Italianate styling by Frank Warner

"The Story of Triumph Sports Cars" by Graham Robson is distributed in the USA by Motorbooks International Inc., 3501 Hennepin Avenue South, Minneapolis, Minn. 55408, at \$10.95.



A rare front view of the Dolomite S8 taken from the sales literature, showing distinctive radiator, enormous brake drums and neat oil tank between the dumb-irons for the dry sump system.

but it was expensive too at close to the price of the new Rolls/Bentley of that era, so that its sale would have to have been very limited.

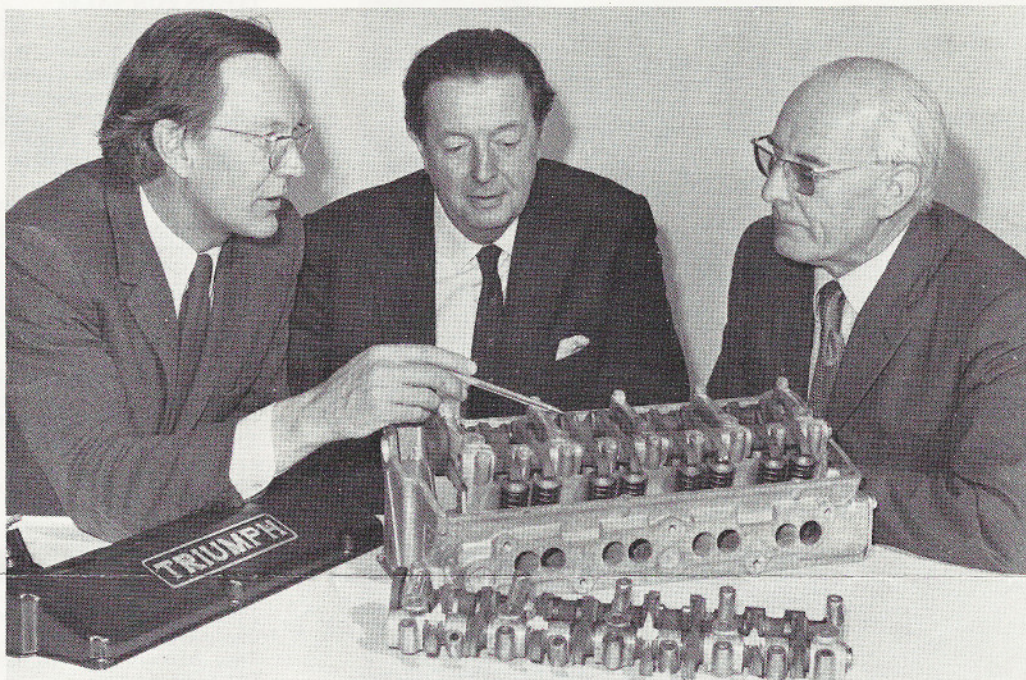
All of this fascinating lore for the car historian and Triumph lover can be found in Graham Robson's excellent and very detailed book "The Story of Triumph Sports Cars". There is one whole chapter on "The Straight Eight Dolomite" giving more information on this fascinating Triumph car than ever published previously. Robson is a Britisher who used to be on Autocar magazine and he was competition secretary of Standard-Triumph also at one time, so that he is well qualified.

If you want to hear how such legendary characters as racing drivers Earl Howe and Tommy Wisdom prevailed on Triumph chairman Claude Holbrook to OK the experiment? How Healey rushed through the first engine in six months? How Hiduminium and Electron and other precious metals were incorporated? And what eventually happened to the glorious Three? Get the book and read it. It's an epic all right.

And the moral is—You can sometimes get the same or more performance in an easier, simpler and less expensive way, but perhaps with not quite so much Panache or should it be Brio?

John Dugdale, Editor

The Design Council Award-winning Triumph Dolomite Sprint cylinder head with, left to right, design team leader Spen King, Rover Triumph Managing Director Bernard Jackman, design team member Jim Parkinson.



BRITISH DESIGN AWARD FOR 1974 TRIUMPH DOLOMITE SPRINT CYLINDER HEAD

INTERESTING NEW LAY-OUT USED IN COMPACT SEDANS SELLING IN EUROPE

A Triumph high-performance engine that took just months from first thoughts to startling its designers with its power and smoothness on test, has won one of the six 1974 Design Council Awards for the British motor industry, for the design of its cylinder head. "When we started work on what became the Triumph Dolomite Sprint engine we were looking for a potential race and rally winner—but one that Grandma could also use for shopping," says Spen King, the man who headed the design team responsible for the engine.

To meet this contradictory need Spen King and his team specified four valves per cylinder, a feature more usually seen on pure racing engines. Then they looked for ways to put all the components where they could work at peak efficiency yet avoid the complications that usually result.

"We wanted inclined valves, so we put the camshaft on top of the inlets and pivoted rockers across to the exhaust valves," explained Mr. King. "We built a test rig and it worked. Then we built an engine and that gave us much more power than we expected. So we tamed it a little and dropped it into the Dolomite to make the Sprint."

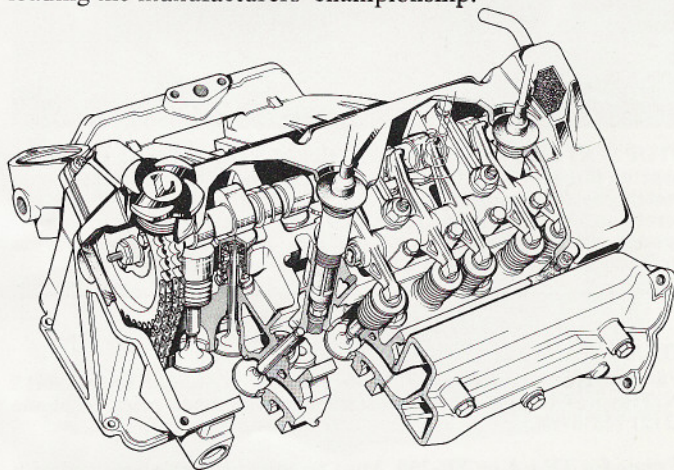
It was this camshaft layout which took the fancy of the Design Council's judges. They commented that it was a design philosophy that could be extended to many other vehicles for greater efficiency and reduced pollution from exhaust emissions.

The engine was the product of British Leyland's decision to go into the important European small luxury high performance sedan car market. The requirement was to combine outstanding performance with luxury, economy and exceptional value for money.

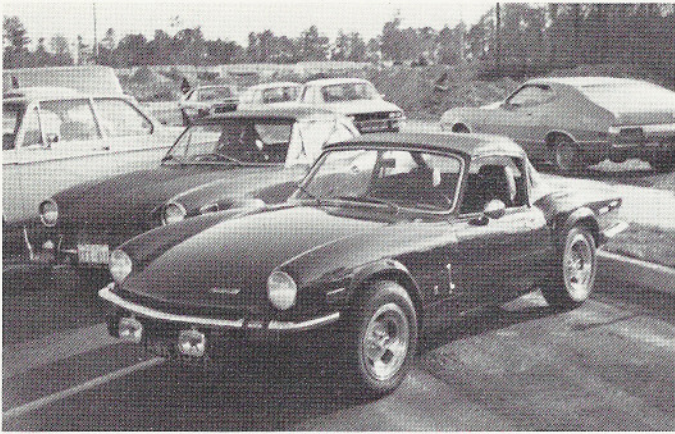
Four valves per cylinder were adopted to provide high power with improved breathing, cleaner combustion and long mechanical life. Compared with traditional aids to high engine efficiency, the Sprint valve-gear offers less increase in cost, plus space and weight savings.

The single camshaft operating all the inlet valves directly and the exhausts by rockers reduces the number of moving parts to as few as possible. The judges commented that this minimised valve gear stresses and increased reliability.

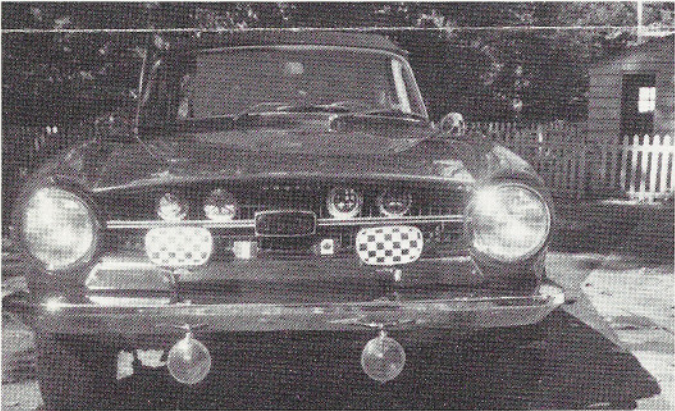
The Dolomite Sprint prototype made an impressive showing first time out in the 1972 Scottish Rally in the hands of Brian Culcheth. In the 1974 Castrol 75th Anniversary Group One saloon car championship, Sprints are leading the manufacturers' championship.



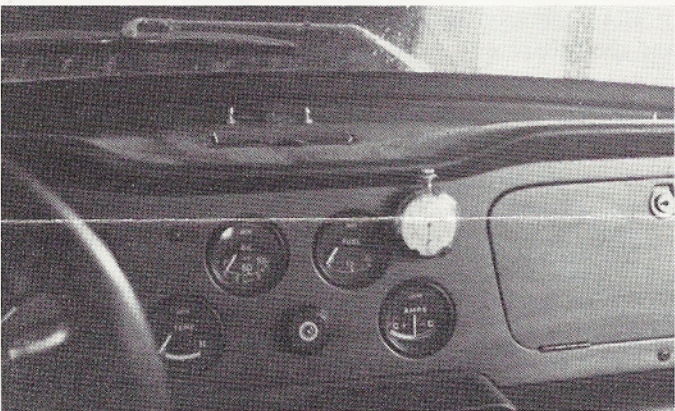
1974 Triumph Dolomite Sprint cylinder head—
four valves per cylinder layout



DRESSING UP A SPITFIRE: Newsletter reader Doug Blank of Niles, Ohio sent us this photo of his very smart Mark IV complete with mag wheels, 165x13 Semperit radials, and Lucas Square 8 fog lights. "Just a small investment" he claims.



MORE DRESSING UP: This time a 1972 TR-6, complete with rally and fog lights, plus half a dozen assorted badges, brought to you by courtesy of Marc Walther, of Ardmore, Pa.



STOP WATCH IDEA: Michael A. Coe of Vernon, British Columbia sent us this photo of his facia-mounted time piece. He uses a stop watch clip (clip-board variety) and locates it with the existing dash screw on his 1971 TR-6. The wood dash is protected by gluing on sponge rubber to the back of the clip. Actually Michael uses an ordinary pocket watch and winds it up while the engine warms!

CLASSIFIED

ITEMS WANTED

Factory Hardtop for 1973 TR-6 wanted. Write G. Freed, 6415 N. Hoyne, Chicago, Ill. 60645 stating condition and price, or phone (312) 761-8484.

Frame for TR4-A or TR-250. Must be straight, with no rot and with or without suspension. East Coast Area. David Pettigrew, 51 Hattertown Rd., Monroe, Conn. 06468 (203) 268-8261.

ITEMS FOR SALE:

Workshop Manual for Triumph TR-5, TR-250, TR-6, 1967-70 Auto Press, \$3.75; Factory Workshop Manual, TR-4, 4A, \$12; TR-250 Factory Workshop Manual Supplement, \$6.00; TR-6 Factory Workshop Manual Supplement, \$6.00. All items in excellent condition. Kenneth J. Hillers, Laurel Brook Condominiums, Route 88, 16D Court M, Brick Town, N.J. 08723. Business Phone (9-5) (201) 949-3189; Home Phone (after 6) (201) 295-4135.

Several TR-4s, TR4-As and TR-250s parted. Complete line of used good parts including transmissions (w. or w.o. overdrive), engines, doors, hoods, pistons, rear ends (solid or I.R.S.), seats, wheels (wire or steel), etc. Gary Ehnes, 143 Brighton Rd., Tonawanda, New York 14150 (716) 876-7898.

TR-4 engine \$100, TR4-A engine \$80, TR-4 trans. w/OD \$170, TR-3 shortblock \$10, TR-4 rear axle \$50, L & R doors for TR-4 \$30 each, disc wheels \$15/2, 6.85-15 (175-15) stud snow tires \$10 each, F cam \$15, TR-4 front suspension units \$20 each, comp valve spring set \$15, finned aluminum oil pan & rocker cover \$20 each, TR-4 front shocks \$5 each, rears \$10 each, tach. & speedo. \$15 each, TR-4 body section from doors back \$50, complete wiring harness, misc. electrics, all kinds of bits & pieces. All prices "or best offer", will make a good "total package" deal. Dave Paul, 1186 Oakley Avenue, Topeka, Kansas 66604 (913) 235-6888 after 5 PM weekdays, anytime on weekend.

5 Firestone Indy Super Sport racing tires size 5.50/8.10-15 (2 good, 2 fair, 1 flat spotted) \$50 for all 5. Daytona Invader full face Helmet size extra large w/3 Comp. Shields. \$29.95 (has 70 Snell Sticker). Tom Myers, 2004 E. Michigan Ave., Urbana, Ill. 61801 (217) 344-8561.

1973 GT-6 MK III. Bright Red, 8,000 miles only. Michelin XAs, Minilite Sports, Koni Shocks. \$3,500 or offer. Michael B. Stanley, 5808 Dickson Road, Jacksonville, Florida 32211 (904) 743-4506.

1972 TRIUMPH SPITFIRE MK IV; overdrive, tonneau, boot, 2 trunk lids, 1 with luggage rack mounted. British Racing Green, soft top; well maintained; 26,000 miles, excellent throughout. Records, manuals, catalogs and some spare parts. Original owner offering for sale due to personal financial difficulties. Please only serious inquiries offering over \$2,300. D. E. Langley, P.O. Box 1224, New Boston, Texas 75570.

Miscellaneous TR-3, TR-4, Spit. & GT-6 parts. Doug Spencer, Harsins Island, Michigan (313) 748-3581.

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	\$1.00
TSOA Handbook, 2nd Edition	\$2.00
Supplement to TSOA Handbook, 1973	\$.75
Triumph Automobile Association badge	\$1.50
GT-6/2000 Competition Preparation Manual	\$2.50
TR-4/TR-4A Competition Preparation Manual	\$2.50
SPITFIRE Mk-I-II-III Competition Preparation Manual	\$2.50
TR-250/TR-6 Competition Preparation Manual	\$2.50
GT-6+ Competition Preparation Manual	\$2.50
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	\$.50
British Leyland Competition Stickers, Mylar	3 for \$1.00
Triumph history 34-page reprint ("Automobile Quarterly")	\$1.95
"Triumph—50 Years of Sports Car" history poster	\$3.00

Send Check or Money Order. No C.O.D.'s please.

Please make checks payable to Triumph Sports Owners Association.

The TSOA NEWSLETTER is published monthly by the Triumph Sports Owners Association, 600 Willow Tree Road, Leonia, N.J. 07605. TSOA is a national organization of American sports car enthusiasts who own a Triumph or are interested in the purposes of the Association. Subscription is included with a \$5.00 membership in the Club.

EDITOR, JOHN F. DUGDALE