

Triumph



Newsletter

TSOA

TRIUMPH SPORTS OWNERS ASSOCIATION



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NOVEMBER-DECEMBER, 1976

TR7's First Full Year in America

ENTHUSIASTIC RECEPTION; COMPETITION SUCCESSES; NEW AUTOMATIC MODEL



ABOVE: The automatic transmission-equipped Triumph TR7 has a gear selector with safety lock release located on the selector knob.

LEFT: The Triumph TR7's comfortable cockpit with console mounted automatic transmission selector lever. The hand brake is located behind the gear lever, together with a convenient storage locker for maps, gloves, etc. The brushed nylon upholstered bucket seats are adjustable fore-and-aft and are fully reclining. Interior trim colors are either beige or black.

The past twelve months of 1976 represent the first full year of marketing Triumph's most radical change of model in a decade—the TR7 wedge-shaped coupe. In that period, 16,000 TR7s have been purchased by their American owners, making TR7 the fastest selling single model ever introduced to the U.S. market by the Coventry/Liverpool manufacturer. TR7 was first imported in April 1975 but initial production took time to build up to the current 2,000 a month rate. The total of TR7s now in owner hands is over 22,000.

Reception of TR7 has been enthusiastic all the way. Sports car buffs—including top auto editors—like it for its excellent road holding and accurate steering, strong front disc brakes, close ratio gearbox, and lively, high revving slant 2-litre engine, the whole package of thoroughly contemporary design. As to creature comforts, the TR7 provides more interior passenger room and luggage compart-

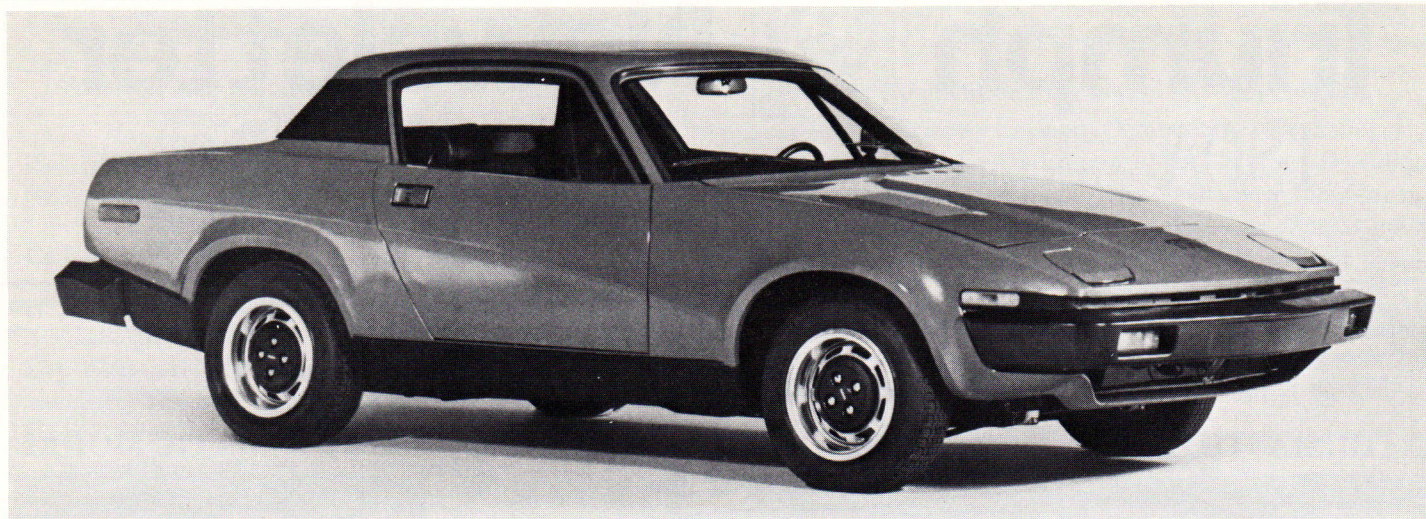
ment space than any other British Leyland two-seater sports car, whilst the air conditioning and heating systems have proved to be first class. To this is now added the convenience option of automatic transmission.

In 1976, as readers of Triumph Newsletter are aware, both Group 44 in the East and Huffaker Engineering in the West fielded race-prepared TR7s in SCCA events, winning the North East Divisional championship and missing their national class championship by less than one second of time—to a TR6! In Europe where TR7 was launched almost a year later than in the States, TR7s began a rally programme and have shown good promise.

Now British Leyland Motors Inc. is seriously investigating direct participation in the 1977 professional rally series in the USA and Canada. So we all look forward to a progressive New Year for our new model series—Triumph's TR7!

The Editor

TR7'S FIRST FULL YEAR IN AMERICA: NEW AUTOMATIC MODEL (continued)



The popular Triumph TR7 sports car is now available with automatic transmission. The manufacturer's suggested list price is \$4,995 at Ports of Entry with four-speed manual transmission. The automatic option adds \$300. Air conditioning is also available.

LEONIA, N.J., December 20th, 1976: British Leyland Motor's popular Triumph TR7 sports car is now available with automatic transmission, the company has announced.

In standard trim, the TR7 is supplied with a four-speed all-synchromesh manual gearbox. The manufacturer's suggested list price is \$4,995 at Ports of Entry following a recently announced retail price reduction for remaining 1976 TR7s. The automatic option carries a suggested list price of \$300.

"The TR7 was designed particularly for those who want a car with more comfort and convenience than a traditional sports car provides. Availability of the automatic will, therefore, strengthen the TR7's appeal in that important and sizeable portion of the overall sports car market," says Graham W. Whitehead, President of British Leyland Motors Inc. He estimates that 20 percent of the TR7s brought into the U.S. will be equipped with the new transmission.

The automatic transmission option is expected to have particular appeal to women drivers, whose driving patterns tend to involve shorter runs in traffic and in shopping locations, where an automatic has particular advantages.

The new transmission is a Borg Warner type 65 three-speed unit driving through a higher rear axle ratio of 3.27 to 1. Federal EPA miles-per-gallon figures for the automatic TR7 are 19 in the city and 27 on the highway for the dual carburetor versions for all states but California. This compares with 21 in the city and 30 on the highway for the stick shift version. With automatic transmission the TR7 accelerates from 0 to 50 mph in 10.4 sec.

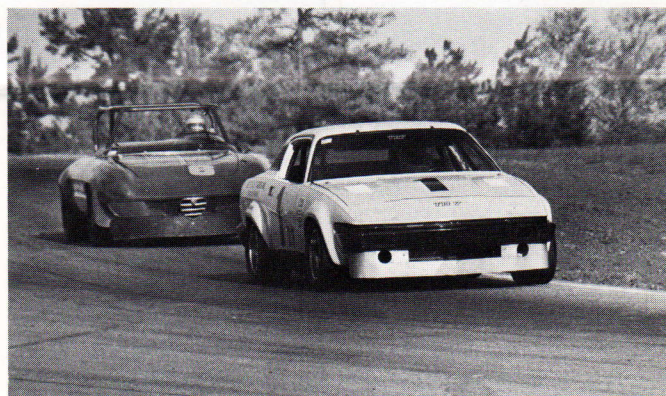
The TR7 coupe has a four-cylinder, two-liter (122CID) overhead camshaft engine with the cylinder bores at a 45-degree angle to reduce engine height. The power plant has an electronic ignition system and therefore there are no distributor points to adjust, clean or replace. The slanted engine, combined with electrically operated pop-up headlights, makes a sharply sloped hood line possible.

Besides providing a design that is startlingly new, the TR7's wedge shape aims through better aerodynamics to improve road holding, to reduce wind noise and to improve

fuel mileage. The TR7 has a carefully engineered long-travel suspension which provides sedan-like comfort coupled with sports car handling. Both the front and rear tracks measure 53-inches plus. The wide-track design and radial ply tires combine to make the TR7 exceptionally sure footed in turns.

Improvements incorporated during run of production in the latest TR7s include a cut-off switch on the dash for the optional air conditioning system's compressor; self-releasing luggage trunk lid stay; and drive-train modifications for increased silence in operation. Also offered as options in the U.S. are color co-ordinated striping kits.

The Triumph TR7 coupe was first introduced in the U.S. market in April, 1975. Sales of all Triumph models have achieved a record year. The 28,238 units sold through December, 1976 exceeded the best full year's total previously recorded for the make by over 3,000 units.



Week-End Warrior: Ken Slagle of Harrison, Pa. shown here racing his TR7 in the 1976 SCCA Atlanta championships is one of the best "week-end warriors" in racing. His regular job is as an engineer for IBM but he is also a former SCCA National Champion and a two-time NE Division Champion, each time driving a Triumph Spitfire. His latest Triumph TR7 was due on display at Expo Racing '77 at New York's Madison Square Garden January 22nd to 26th.

This is billed as America's first racing car show and is modelled on the successful one in London which has run for many years. All classes of race car are included among the more than 80 exhibits.

“Solo II” — SCCA and British Leyland promote a new and growing motor sport

Only the force being taken by the left front wheel and the fact that the driver wears a crash helmet, reveal the strenuous sort of testing this TR7 is receiving from Solo II champion Jeff Garber.



In its year end round-up of the 1976 season, the Sports Car Club of America called 1976 the most active of its 33-year history. A record 401 events were sanctioned and conducted including racing, rallying and Solo I and II competition.

In Solo, SCCA sanctioned 22 Solo I events including time trials, hillclimbs and schools: and there were seven Divisional Solo II championships which averaged 130 entries. At year's end the British Leyland Motors Inc. sponsored National Solo II championship attracted a record 376 contestants. Triumph MG and Jaguar cars were prominent in almost all forms of SCCA competition last year.

* * *

In the summer of 1973, officials of the Sports Car Club of America approached British Leyland with the idea of sponsoring the first annual National Solo II Championships. Solo events, little publicized outside the SCCA and its member regions, are now a competitive outlet for hundreds of club members and are growing in popularity every year. So it was that three years ago SCCA's national office felt it time to establish a championship event similar to the Road Atlanta run-offs held for the racing group.

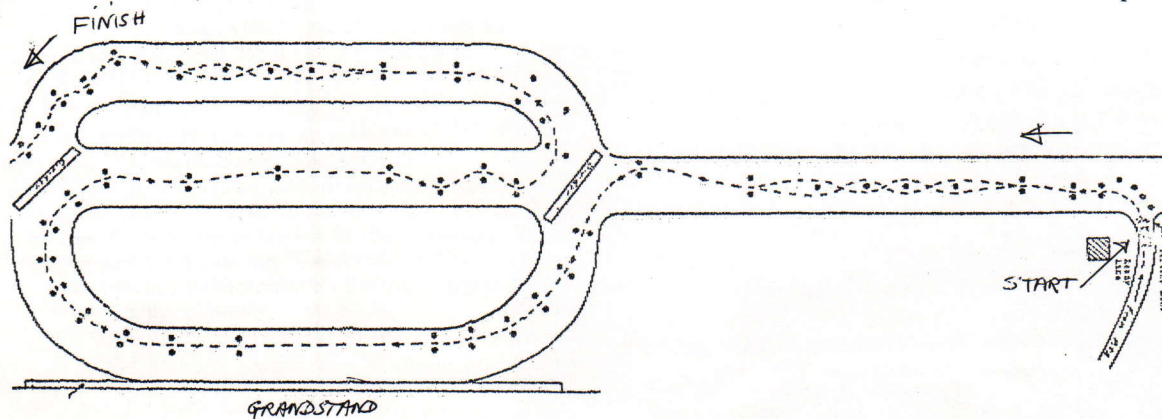
After agreeing to sponsor the event, British Leyland competition people first had to learn about Solo II. The numeral differentiates these competitions from high-speed hill climbs or slaloms, held as Solo I meets. Solo II is

well-described by the phrase “parking lot races.” Hardly a derogatory description, this points up the location for most of the weekend solo events run all over the country. For the championships the site may be an airport or other large paved facility but the principle is the same.

Entrants in Solo II run one car at a time over a course marked usually by rubber cones. Scoring is done by timing but a run must also be “clean.” Pylons knocked down mean time penalties, usually one second per pylon. Any off-course excursion means no time for that run. It's an exacting branch of the sport, requiring precise driving ability and the kind of concentration which allows a driver who has been waiting in line for an hour suddenly to turn on his best effort and score a winning run which lasts a little over a minute.

As sponsor, British Leyland had to come up with an interesting way to promote the event both to the news media, to the public and to the entrants themselves. What came out of the brainstorming sessions was a new approach, the First Annual Identical Car Championship in 1973. Two Austin Marinas were provided and each class winner, as soon as declared, took another run over the course in the Marina for another trophy—the British Leyland ID Trophy, creating a kind of champion's champion.

In 1974, the event was not sponsored by BL due to organizational problems but it came back strong in 1975 at Salina, Kans., where the ID Champ cars were TR7s.



Typical example of a comparatively low speed Solo II course. Entry road to oval measures about 500 ft. long. Shortest distance between pylons is 35 ft. Competitors can drive either side of the 'slalom' section pylons.

The Championships had settled down a bit now and ran more smoothly. The SCCA announced that the 1976 event, to be held at Columbus, Ohio, would consist only of entrants who had qualified in the first four places in division, in similar fashion to the Atlanta run-offs. MLC

GARBER WINS 1976 BRITISH LEYLAND'S SOLO II IDENTICAL CAR CHAMPIONSHIP —376 ENTRANTS COMPETE

Jeff Garber of Braintree, Mass., became the British Leyland Identical Car champion at the 1976 SCCA National Solo II Championship held in Columbus, Ohio, over the weekend of September 18-19. Competing in his first National Solo II Championship, Garber first took E Stock Class in his Austin Healey 100-6-3000 and then captured the British Leyland award.

The Championship matched 20 class champions in identically prepared Triumph TR7s over a half-mile twisting pylon marked autocross course. Garber completed the course in one minute 7.12 seconds for the fastest overall time.

Trophies were awarded for best time on Saturday and best on Sunday with the faster of the two declared the overall winner. E. Paul Dickinson of Huntington, West Virginia, set the fastest time on Saturday losing to Garber by a few tenths of a second on the combined total.

Some 376 entrants competed in 20 classes of the 1976 SCCA Solo II National Championship the lowest elapsed time in each class for the 0.6 mile autocross course determining the champion.

The following entrants in British Leyland cars took class winning positions:

E Prepared	1st	George Phillips	Spitfire
	2nd	David Lacy	MG Midget
	3rd	John Fender	MG Midget
D Prepared	2nd	Charles LeVesque	Sprite
Ladies C	2nd	Nancy Jacobs	Spitfire

The event was conducted by the Ohio Valley Region of the SCCA.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Experience of GT6 Autocross Champion

Every now and then in the Newsletter someone will request information on preparing a Triumph for Autocross (Slalom) or Solo events. Therefore, I thought some readers might be interested in what a 1969 GT6 Plus is capable of. I purchased the car new and used it as my only means of transportation until 1973, at that time I began participating in local autocrosses and decided to "set-up" the car.

In the last two years the Triumph has scored 27 firsts, 11 seconds, 4 thirds, and 1 fourth out of a total of 43 events. In 1975 we captured the Western Pennsylvania Autocross Championship in our class and in 1976 we have scored 12 firsts in a row, two of them being the fastest time of the day. We have participated in events as large as 201 cars, taking first in class and 23 overall. Also a very fast Solo II event with 111 cars, again taking first in class and a 5th overall.

The GT6 engine is still basically stock except for headers and electrics, but the suspension has undergone modification. Since autocross rules vary throughout the country I would be happy to share my experience with any other Triumph driver who may have specific questions, especially about the GT6. The basic information can be found in the invaluable Competition Preparation Manuals, but a few tricks also help.

—Michael A. Cammarata,
218 Amity Road, Glenshaw, Pa. 15116

"Weird Herald!"

I thought you might be interested in a picture of my 1963 Vitesse (known as Sports 6 in U.S.A.).

This model has gone through a complete mechanical rebuild using a variety of parts from a wide range of Triumph models.

It is known locally as "Weird Herald" and more than holds its own on any autocross course.

My wife drives it to work and I use it weekends for fun.

Many people in much more modern cars can not believe the condition or quickness of this surprising vehicle."

—David Freeman, Jacksonville, Fla.



Two Triumph owners who actively campaign in Solo and Autocross. (Left) Michael A. Cammarata of Glenshaw, Pa., in his GT6, and (right) David Freeman of Jacksonville, Fla. with his Vitesse convertible. Both have enjoyed much success and Michael Cammarata kindly offers to share his car preparation experience with other would-be competitors (See Letters above).

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR (continued)

TR7 Wedge Shaped Garage

Since purchasing my 1976 TR7 from Milroy Chevrolet, Hudson, New York, I have been asked by literally hundreds of people, "Where is your TR7 garage?" In order to conform with your classic advertising, I decided to build my very own TR7 garage. Of course, my neighbors and friends now have serious doubts regarding my sanity and extravagance, however, I am having as much fun showing my garage as I have showing people my TR7.

To date, I have thoroughly enjoyed this car and find myself driving it in preference to my 98 Oldsmobile and Buick.

In any event, I thought that you might like to see the pictures of my "special" garage for my "special TR7". I also added the side pin stripes, very impressive. Keep up the good work.

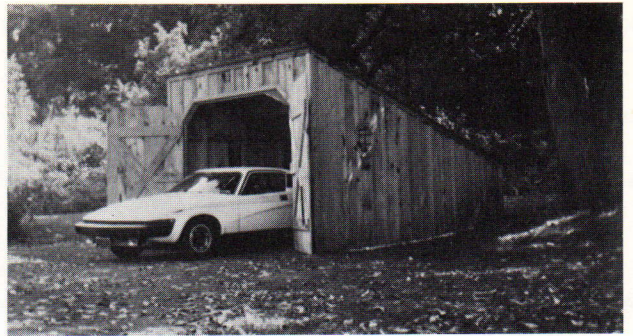
—Kenneth E. Heath, Claverack, N.Y.

TR6—One Proud Owner

It really is a disappointment to me to read article after article in Road Test, Road and Track and now Car and Driver (October 1976; Triumph TR-6 Test) and see the repeated usage of the words "antiquated suspension and design", "snow filtering in around the top", "soggy bucket seats", "buck-board ride" and the like, and yet never see a rebuttal letter. I've tried and my letters never get published. The latest article in Car and Driver gives the TR-6



New Triumph Dealership in Georgia: A fine new facility for the full line of British Leyland cars (Triumph, Jaguar, and MG), called Sports Car Centre by Andy's Ltd., has been opened at 1075 South Cobb Drive, Marietta, Ga. Shown above joining in the opening ceremonies are Graham Whitehead, president of British Leyland Motors Inc., (second from right) congratulating R. R. 'Andy' Anderson, the principal of the dealership. They are flanked by British Leyland executives Mike Dale, sales vice-president (far right), and by Gary Cooper, manager South East Zone.



Triumph TR7 television commercials are now having an unpremeditated effect on American architecture! Kenneth Heath of Claverack, N.Y. has tailored his garage to the 'Wedge'. Such is the power of advertising, at least that created by Triumph's agency Shima/Passberger of New York!

a 50.5/49.5 front rear weight distribution, a 0-60 time of 9.4 sec. and a quarter mile time of 17.4 sec. at 78.0 MPH. Antiquated?

Through Canada, Fraser Canyon in particular, I raced Alfa Spyderys, BMW 2002's, Porsche 912's (I don't give those pseudo-Porsche' 914 2.0's even a second thought. I haven't met one yet that was any competition.) and more 240, 260 and 280-Z's than I could shake a stick at. Given a 2 to 5% grade and a good twisty mountain road those four-bangers just aren't in the same league. Hit any kind of grade and you can wave bye-bye to them all. And the six-cylinder Z's which did make the straight grades, wallowed like boats in the corners. Only one fellow in a 240-Z (whose wife owns a Spitfire which they race on weekends) was able to better our little red sled. But his blue-printed six cylinder was worth over \$4,000 alone, not to mention suspension, wheels, etc.

Car and Driver calls the track too narrow and says no-one would consider doing any "serious tearing around." "You might go sliding around a corner, trip over a storm-sewer grating and go right on your gourd." That's really dense. The Triumph TR-6 has been band wagoned for too long as a "new-old car". TR-6 placed 3rd in the Pepsi Trans-Am against a field of Corvettes, did it not! And what about the new SCCA class records set this year by TR-6?

My 1974 TR-6 is used daily for work and pleasure and I wouldn't trade it for any new car on the market for under \$12,000. Can you think of one? Why \$12,000? Because by 1985 that's what scarcity and inflation will do to price



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR (continued)

of these collector's items now that TR-6 production has halted to make room for a (UGH!) parts factory. How sacrilegious!

Sincerely, One Proud Owner,

—Bill Burroughs, Los Angeles, Calif.

(See last issue's cover story for TR6's latest victory—Paul Newman's SCCA National Championship win.—Editor)

CLUB NEWS

Flourishing New Triumph Club in San Francisco Bay Area

Although this club has been founded less than a year, the Bay Area Triumph Association, now has more than 50 members. The 50th to join was Steve Fish with a Triumph Herald.

This enthusiastic new club decided at a recent meeting by unanimous vote "that our organisation will cater to Triumphs only". Bruce Waller, editor of the club newsletter (titled 'The Triumph Enthusiast'), explains "It's not because we don't like other cars but because this is a Triumph association and we'll direct our energy on bringing to Triumph owners the best possible services we can render. All I can say is, we must be doing something right!"

Triumph owners in the San Francisco area interested in joining should write Rene Poppleton (Treasurer), 2637 Apollo Court, San Jose, Calif. 95121 or telephone Bruce Waller at 415-967-0687.

New Triumph Club on Long Island

Triumph owners living on Long Island, New York, and interested to join a special club for the marque should consider The Long Island Triumph Association formed only last June, yet it already has more than 50 members.

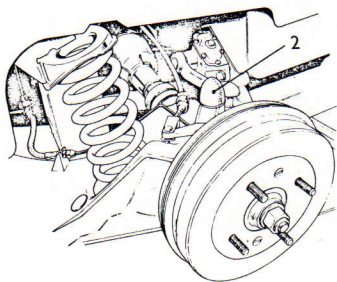
Contact Dr. S. Solomon (president LITA), 561 Hempstead Avenue, West Hempstead, N.Y. 11552 (tel. 516-581-8099); or John Och (secretary), 7 Gardenia Lane, Hicksville, N.Y. 11800 (tel. 516-433-8726).

This is a 'purist' club, the membership of which is made up of Triumph owners only.

TECHNICAL NOTES

Heavy Duty Rear Spring for the TR6

British Leyland's Competition Department, in response to numerous requests from rally and autocross drivers, has developed a heavy duty rear spring for the TR6, #V.739, with a spring rate of 440 lb. as opposed to the stock spring (350 lb.). The spring is ideally suited for rallying as it does not affect the ride height of the vehicle. If this spring is



A special heavy duty rear coil spring for TR6 competition work is now available through Triumph dealers.

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used on autocross cars, however, it is suggested that the shock absorber valves be replaced with competition valves, #AHH 7218 (2 required per vehicle). The spring and valves can be ordered through your local Triumph Dealer.

Spitfire Competition Preparation Manual Available

The British Leyland/Competition Department announces that the 4th Edition of the Spitfire I-IV Competition manual for this model, also available at the same price. includes up-to-date revisions of this ever popular publication and is available through either your local Triumph Dealer or the Competition Department, \$3 postpaid.

For owners of 1500 Spitfires, there is a special preparation manual for this model, also available at the same price. Please be sure to specify which manual is desired when ordering.

CLASSIFIED

FOR SALE

TR-4 and Spitfire parts; eng., drive-train, body, glass and instruments, too much to list here. Cash or trade could use TR-4 tonneau cover and Spitfire comp. Wheels. Bob Snyder, RD #2, Haskell Road, Cuba, N.Y. 14727.

Full race 1,080cc Triumph Herald engine and misc. spare engine parts. Also engine oil cooler, Spitfire convertible top bows, 4½" and 5½" wheels for Spitfire, and pit board with fluorescent numbers. Don Hamilton, 2277 Lost Tree Way, Bloomfield Hills, Mich. 48013. Phone (313) 334-0416.

GT-6 limited-slip differential; good condition, 3:89 gears. \$250. Contact Bob Romans, 3827 N. 79 St., Milwaukee, Wisc. 53222.

WANTED

TR-6 factory hardtop, call Ray McIver, (212) 877,8350, or write 1319 N. Hobart St., Philadelphia, Pa. 19131.

Hardtop wanted for 1971 TR6. Donna Paherson, 67 Shadowbrook Road, Shrewsbury, N.J. 07701 (201) 741-1454.

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
British Leyland Competition Stickers, Mylar	2 for \$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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Please make checks payable to British Leyland Motors Inc.

THE TRIUMPH NEWSLETTER—for Triumph enthusiasts

EDITOR: JOHN F. DUGDALE

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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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