



Triumph

TSOA

TRIUMPH SPORTS OWNERS ASSOCIATION



NEWSLETTER

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OCTOBER-NOVEMBER, 1975

RACE SPECIAL!

TRIUMPH SETS NEW CLASS RECORDS AT ATLANTA

JOHN McCOMB GAINS NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP WITH TR6

by Lyman Gaylord

More than 400 experienced and proven sports car race drivers from all over the USA competed at the SCCA annual championships at Atlanta, Georgia at the beginning of November: and out of their closely contested races there came some great victories for Triumph cars. No fewer than three National Class Championships were won—by TR6 (Class D), Spitfire 1500 (Class F), and Spitfire 1150cc (Class G). Congratulations to drivers John McComb, Ken Slagle and Jerry Barker, whose exploits we record below.

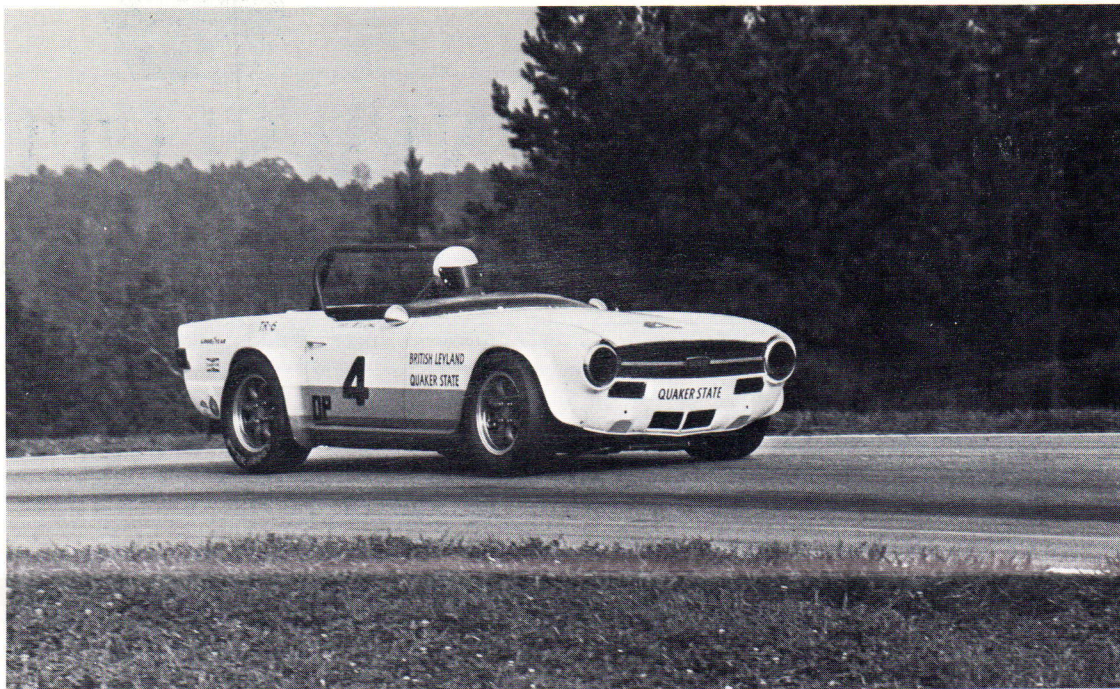
Flowery Branch, Ga., Nov. 2:—John McComb looks a lot like Dennis Weaver playing McCloud on TV. Direct. Clear eyed. You believe what he says instantly and totally.

And there he was in the winner's circle at the Road Atlanta race track on Nov. 2 offering his heartfelt thanks to each and every member of the Group 44 crew. They'd made it possible for McComb to break a six year jinx.

Group 44 had qualified TR-6s for six straight Sports Car Club of America national championship run-offs. Six times they'd gone home empty handed. Not this time—the seventh. McComb had just blown off a fast twenty car class D-Production field, leading the race from flag to flag. At about the half way point he had a lead of almost 10 seconds over Lee Mueller's Jensen-Healey. McComb played it safe and stroked it during the latter laps and finished a comfort-



THE CHAMP! John McComb—congratulated by wife Vici—brought home the Class D-Production championship at 92.4 mph, after a full season of wins in the Group 44 Triumph TR6.



(Photos:
Bill Oursler)

At speed on the uphill section of the Atlanta 2½ mile circuit near Turn 5, John McComb's tough and handsome championship-winning TR6.

able 2.2 seconds ahead of Mueller, the DP National Champion last year and the year before that.

On lap four, McComb turned a 1:36.3 which works out to 94.2 miles an hour over the 2.52-mile, twelve turn Road Atlanta track. A new record by almost three miles per hour. His average for the 18-lap race was faster than last year's fastest single lap. On top of that, he set a new qualifying record.

McComb wasn't the only TR-6 driver to get a kiss from

the race queen. Jim Ray of Spring, Texas, booted his Triumph across the start-finish line in third place. The run-off win was the ninth 1975 victory for the Group 44 TR-6. It was the one that counted.

[Note: The reason the TR6 was not once again locked in battle with Bob Sharp's 240Z was that for 1975 TR6 ran in D-production using the standard equipment carburetors, instead of fuel injection as in previous years. Sharp remained in C-production with the enlarged 2.8 litre Z-car.]

AND HOW TR6 FINISHED THIRD IN A 1

Another John McComb Outstanding Drive (at Brainerd, Minn.) last September.

"Nobody believed us when we told them the TR-6 would finish in the top five at the Pepsi Trans-Am at Brainerd", commented John McComb, "they figured we'd be well down the field. Man, were they surprised when we took third overall!"

In early August Bob Tullius decided to enter the Trans-Am with the V-12 Jaguar and the TR-6 to help track owner and friend Jerry Hansen promote his first professional race since taking over the former Donnybrook track in 1974. Since all four cars were already qualified for the Atlanta run-offs, Tullius felt the team could skip the National at Pocono and challenge the Trans-Am field of Corvettes, Camaros, Mustangs, and Datsuns with the Jaguar and TR-6.

In preparation for the 100-mile endurance contest, the TR-6 was converted back to C-Production specifications. Crew chief Lawton Foushee supervised the installation of the Lucas fuel injection, a 22-gallon fuel cell, and a differential cooler. Although the Trans-Am rules allow 10 in. wide wheels for all competitors, the crew felt little

could be gained by increasing wheel and tire size and did not change the 7 in. wheels used successfully in past years.

In qualifying on the 3-mile Brainerd course, Tullius put the Jaguar on the front row along side Jerry Hansen's A-Production Corvette, while teammate McComb turned a lap of 1:48.98 (99.09 mph), giving him the seventh starting position in the 22 car field.

After qualifying, McComb described an encounter with a Corvette driver in the pits. "As I was climbing out of the car he walked over with a big frown on his face and said, 'Jeez that TR-6 is fast. I blew you away down the straight, and about the time I started braking for turn 2 you went by me like I was standing still!' I'm not sure he believed me when I told him I was flat out from the beginning of the straight all the way through turns 1 and 2 before braking for 3."

At the drop of the flag, Tullius and Hansen took off into the lead as McComb dropped several places to the more powerful Corvettes. As the race pattern developed, Tullius and Hansen opened up a big gap over the rest of the field and swapped the lead back and forth until the 15th of the scheduled 33 laps when Tullius was

TRIUMPH SETS NEW CLASS RECORDS AT ATLANTA (continued)

Slagle's Spitfire Makes it Look Easy

The Nov. 1, F-Production race was supposed to be close. Ken Slagle, the Group's John Kelly, Rick Cline from Florida and Tom McCarthy from California all figured as potential winners. Slagle's 1500 Spitfire won the pole with McCarthy's 1500 on the outside. Kelly's MG Midget was gridded fourth. Cline's 1300 Spit blew an engine in qualifying and he had to settle for the tail end spot on the grid.

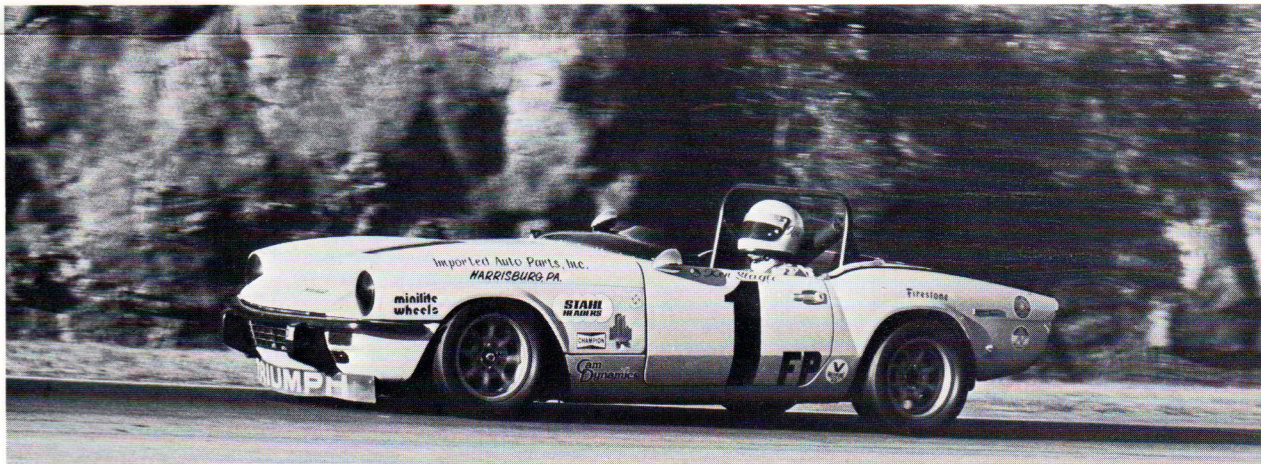
But there was never really any race. Slagle gained a couple of car lengths on McCarthy by the first turn and he just opened and opened that lead for the next 30 minutes. At the checker he had an 18.8 second margin on Dan Pohl's ex-Group 44 Spitfire. On lap five, Slagle was timed at 1:40.02 or 90.7 MPH, a new single lap record for FP. Like McComb, he turned a race average faster than the previous single fastest lap. Kelly (MG Midget) finished third. McCarthy dropped to sixth when a rear axle broke.

Cline, who couldn't get his act together with any of his cars this year, was last. Eight of the top ten finishers drove Spitfires.

Ken Slagle's big win at the SCCA run-offs at Road Atlanta is all the more notable when you realize that the Slagle racing team is a one man plus wife operation.

Slagle does virtually all the work on his Spitfire 1500. His sponsor is Imported Auto Parts of Harrisburg, Pa. and the most important part of their support is giving Ken the run of their machine shop after hours and on weekends. Not that he's a machinist; he's an IBM data processing engineer. He taught himself how to run a lathe and the other tools required to build a super fast motor.

Learning how to run a lathe isn't any big deal but Ken's obviously a master machinist. His 1500 won eight regular season SCCA nationals plus the big one at Road Atlanta.



The hot Spitfire 1500 driven to the F-Production championship by Ken Slagle, has been in good form all this year, winning 8 races.

TRANS AM...

forced to retire the Jaguar with a mechanical failure.

McComb and the TR6 began to pick off the Corvettes one at a time by drafting down the long 5,200 foot straight and slingshotting past as they braked for turn 2. He'd then work his way into position behind the next car and tuck into his draft as they entered the straight and complete the pass going into turn 2. By mid-distance McComb had moved into fifth place, then inherited fourth when Paul Nichter's Mustang was sidelined by clutch failure. McComb took the checkered flag fourth behind Hansen's Corvette, John Bauer's Porsche Carrera, and the Greenwood-bodied Corvette of Rich Sloma. In the post race weigh-in Sloma's car was disqualified for being underweight, which moved McComb up to third overall with the 2.5 litre TR-6—an absolutely outstanding performance by any standards!

"The car ran flawlessly and it was handling so well I could drive it anywhere on the track which made it a great deal easier to pass the Corvettes. I knew I'd lose ground at the start, but figured I could draft them down the straight and get by as they braked for turn 2. Worked every time!"

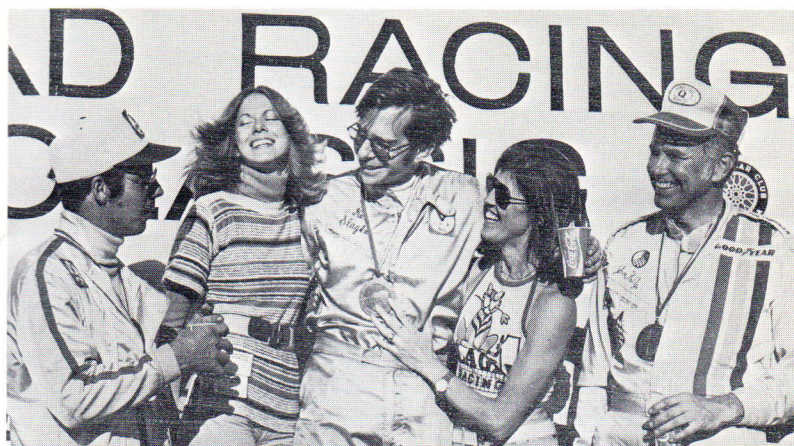
PAUL BRAND



It was a great day for Triumph. Here Class F-Production victor Ken Slagle is chaired by race driver friends Mike Dale (Sprite) and Sam Feinstein (Cobra). Slagle is an independent from Harrisburg, Pa.



Another Spitfire champion, Jerry Barker from Ceritos, Calif., drove a hotly contested race to win in G-Production.



The fruits of victory—champion Ken Slagle (centre) is hugged by his wife Janet (right) and by Miss Road Atlanta. On either flank, Dan Pohlbel (left) who finished second and John Kelly (right) whose Group 44 MG Midget was third.

The Return of Jerry Barker

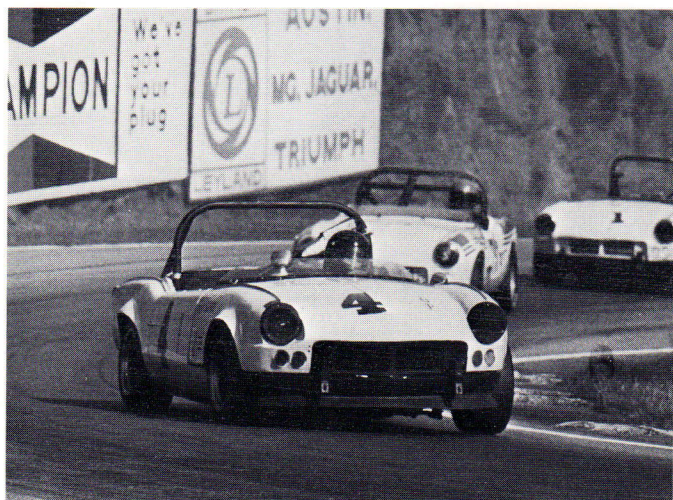
Back in 1968, '69 and '70, Southern Californian Jerry Barker was one of the best G-Production Spitfire drivers in the country. Then he hung it up and went Regional racing with a Formula Vee. This year Jerry was back in a Spitfire cockpit; handily won five Southern Pacific nationals and walked off with the Divisional Championship.

At Road Atlanta he also walked off with the National Championship, winning over the 1974 titlist Joe Hauser by better than six seconds. In third spot was Mark McCarthy of San Jose, Calif., Tom McCarthy's brother, and like his brother a Spitfire driver.

The fastest lap was turned in by Texan George Martin's Spitfire. Martin, who was also the fastest qualifier, retired on the fifth lap with mechanical problems. Rob Hoskins of Florida, who was driving Rick Cline's 1972 GP championship car, led the race for fourteen laps before he retired.

Road Racing Driver Club Honors Dan Pohlbel

Another Spitfire driver at the run-offs was singled out for a special attention by the RRDC. He's Dan Pohlbel of Englewood, Ohio, and he was presented with the Mark Donohue Road Racing Driver Club award for his persever-



Here Barker's 1,147cc Spitfire leads a couple of others at Turn 5. Looks like Terry Barnard lying third in this bunch.

ance and outstanding performance, win or lose.

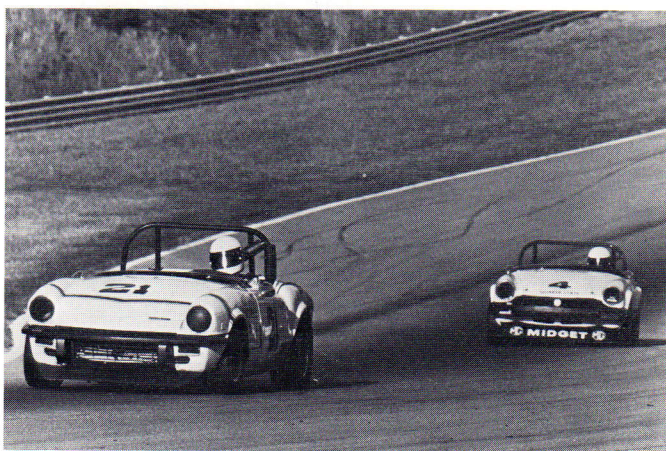
Pohlbel had a harrowing week at Road Atlanta. In practice he blew his 1500cc Spitfire engine. Then he broke his spare motor and damaged his oil cooler beyond repair. Ken Slagle provided him with an oil cooler and Group 44 came to the rescue with an engine—actually the back up motor for John Kelly's new MG Midget.

Starting seventh on the grid, Pohlbel picked off one car after the other, including Kelly's MG, until there was only one racer ahead of him—the flying Slagle.

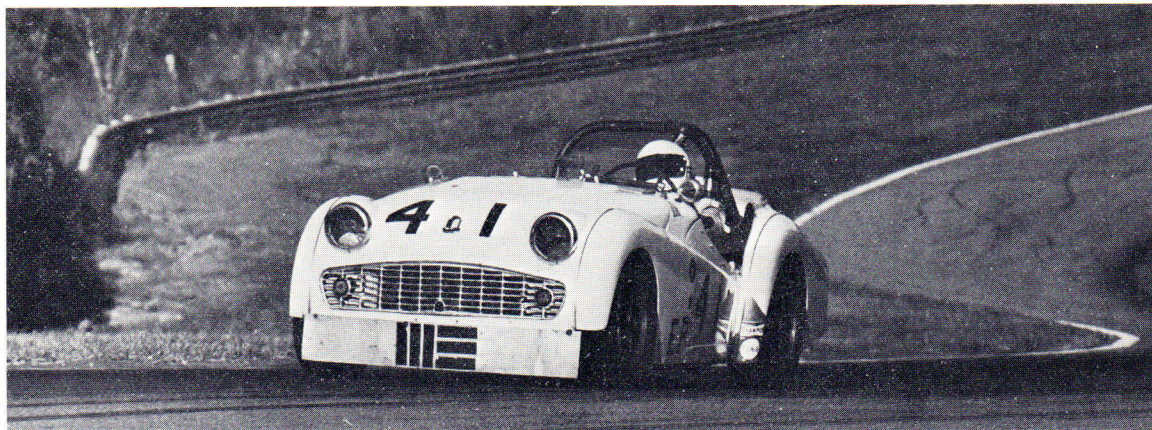
The RRDC award is now given in memory of the late Mark Donohue who was president of RRDC at the time of his death. Acting president Bob Sharp presented the award at the victory banquet following a eulogy to Donohue given by Phil Hill, America's only World Driving Champion and himself a long time member of the RRDC.

And Glory for a Vintage TR3

Had there been a "damn the torpedos, full speed ahead" award, a Triumph driver, Hardy Prentice of California would have to have been the top nominee. Prentice's car in the highly competitive E-Production go-round, complete



A special honor went to Dan Pohlbel whose Spitfire 1500 finished second in F-Production. He received the Mark Donohue award of the Road Racing Drivers Club for outstanding performance—win or lose.



"Full Speed Ahead" award should go to Hardy Prentice of San Francisco whose aging TR3, after starting 14th finished 8th among such crack competition as Fuerstenau's and Visger's MG-Bs.

with Group 44's Brian Fuerstenau, MGB, and Joe Huf-faker's Terry Visger, also MGB, was a vintage TR-3. Prentice started 14th in the 23-car EP field and motored himself into eighth place at the drop of the checkered flag. Prentice and his aging TR-3 were so steady you had the distinct impression that had it been a three hour dice instead of 30 minutes, he'd have won. Hardy has class. His tow car is an E-type Jaguar.

SCCA CHAMPIONSHIP RESULTS
Atlanta, Georgia November 1975

G-Production Class

1. Jerry Barker, Cerritos, Calif. (Triumph Spitfire) 84.97mph
 2. Joe Hauser, Odenton, Md. (A-H Sprite)
 3. Mark McCarthy, San Jose, Calif. (Triumph Spitfire)
- Fastest race lap: George Martin (Triumph Spitfire) 1:44.9=86.4mph

F-Production Class

1. Ken Slagle, Harrisburg, Pa. (Triumph Spitfire) 89.84mph
 2. Dan Pohlman, Englewood, Ohio (Triumph Spitfire)
 3. John Kelly, Gaithersburg, Md. (MG Midget)
- Fastest race lap: Ken Slagle (Triumph Spitfire) 1:40.02=90.7mph

D-Production Class

1. John McComb, Hutchinson, Kan. (Triumph TR6) 92.40mph
 2. Lee Mueller, Lynwood, Calif. (Jensen-Healey)
 3. Jim Ray, Spring, Tex. (Triumph TR6)
- Fastest race lap: John McComb (Triumph TR6) 1:36.3=94.2mph

SCCA Production Class Racing

The successful Triumphs all competed in SCCA Production Class racing, which meant that certain modifications were permitted on the cars partly for race safety and partly in the driver's normal need to go as fast as possible.

Thus for safety a regulation roll bar, on-board fire extinguisher, driver's crash helmet, 5-point safety harness, and fireproof suit are compulsory.

Car modifications allowed are in three main areas and include the following examples:

Engines can have modified pistons, valves and camshafts; and the compression can be raised.

Suspension mods include shock absorbers; wider wheels and tires; axle and hub material, all within stated limits.

Bodies can be lightened within set limits, spoilers may be added; and safety fuel tanks are compulsory.

The Production classes are the closest to street cars in SCCA racing. Other classes include Sports/Racing (wheels-enclosed Cam-Am type cars) and various Formula racers (open wheel).

CLUB NEWS

Novel Costume Rally for Hallow'een Time

A very successful rally was held at the end of October by the Triumph Sports Car Club of New Jersey. Called 'Dracula's Revenge', it started in Clifton and ended at Craigmear Ski Lodge in Newfoundland, N.J. Over 160 cars, counting all makes, competed and everyone turned out in costume.

Best Triumph was Larry Mangarelli's red 1968 Spitfire with Denise Fanella as navigator. Second was John Casale's blue 1971 Spitfire with Kathy Dobrenic navigating.

[Club inquiries to Chuck Lefkowitz, 23 Chatham Rd., Flanders, N.J. 07836]

New Club for Triumph Owners in Minnesota

An enthusiastic Triumph owner from St. Paul, Minnesota, is keen to form a local TSOA chapter. All those interested are asked to get in touch with Mr. Joseph Bisanz, TSOA of Minnesota, 1889 Stanford Ave., St. Paul, Minn. 55105.

Fall Color Tour

In late October, among the last beautiful autumn days in Michigan, 25 Triumphs from the Detroit Triumph Sports Club (joined by the Great Lakes Morgan Owners Group) held a non-competitive, scenic tour. The two hour route led through rolling hill country and by inland lakes, culminating at a local cider mill.

[Club inquiries to D. Phleeger, 12137 Sanford Ave., Detroit, Mich. 48205]

27mpg With TR7 Over The Continental Divide

I want to take a moment to express my delight with my TR7. After what seemed like an interminable wait, I was called in early September and told, "We have your car." Just two weeks later my wife and I departed in the car for Aspen. We had only about 500 miles on the car and I was concerned that some hidden problem might surface.

I needn't have worried. A day spent in air conditioned comfort crossing scorched Kansas culminated in a breath taking drive over the 12,500 foot high Trail Ridge in Rocky Mountain Park. We spent a week in the high country visiting Steamboat Springs, Vail, Breckenridge and Aspen. We crossed the Continental Divide over its highest pass at Independence, Colorado.

I must say that this TR7 is the most responsive motor car that I have ever owned. Control, steering, braking and stability are remarkable. While fast enough to meet every requirement on open highway, its performance on the narrow twisting roads and the steep grades of the high country must be experienced to be believed.

One last item that is important today. We traveled 2860 miles on 103.2 gallons of regular gasoline. I calculate that to be 27.7 miles per gallon.

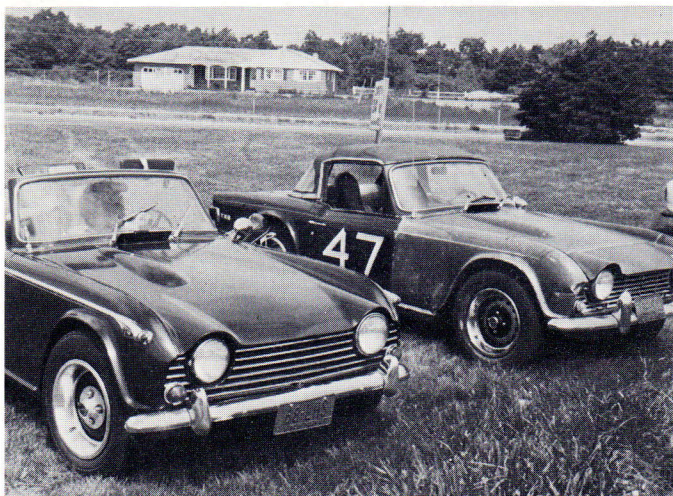
—Brigadier General Marvin H. Knoll,
U. S. Air Force

Things Are Not Always What They Seem

I thought you might be interested in seeing what I did after a friend of mine hit a telephone pole with a 1968 TR250; and after my TR6 was hit by a Chevrolet.

The blue TR250 (left) is a 1968, with a 1969 rear end. The accident had been on the driver's side, ripping off the driver's door and the left rear quarter. The burgundy TR6 (right) is a 1972 with a 1962 TR4 nose. The accident had damaged the front, but left the car virtually undamaged from the motor back. I could have repaired the cars back to their original condition and had the standard Triumph, but I was always a firm believer in owning a car that is one of a kind. Our slogan is, "Old Triumphs never die!"

—Thomas E. Murphy, Kings Park, N.Y.



Reader Murphy sends us this photo of two hybrids—a 1968/1969 TR250 and a 1972/1962 TR6-4!

Triumph Newsletter readers and members of Triumph clubs are welcome to submit short Classified Advertisements of "Items For Sale", or "Items Wanted". However, we cannot accept responsibility in these transactions and publication is intended only as a Service, for which no cost is charged.

FOR SALE

1968 GT6—New clutch, shocks, etc.—40,000 miles—Yellow. Good condition. \$900. (203) 327-5396 or Morley, 1019 Hope St., Stamford, Connecticut 06907.

Hard top for TR6. Factory equipment. Damson color, perfect condition. \$200. Also tonneau cover \$30; and one Goodyear 185/15 on TR6 rim \$20. Vincent J. Monterosso, 10 Westbury Ave., Staten Island, N.Y. 10301. (212) 273-9252.

Spitfire Mk IV parts: complete engine head for 1300 cc, valves ground, fully assembled, \$70; disc brake rotor, \$10; front end road spring (coded red), \$10; disc brake caliper (left frt.), \$15; box of nuts, bolts, gaskets, grommets, shims, carb needles, hoses, wires, etc., \$5. Michael S. Tullis, 4192 Carondelet Drive, Dayton, Ohio 45440. (513) 529-0383.

Original factory metal hard top, glass window and upholstered inside—fitting 1970 Triumph Spitfire—should also fit '69. \$175. excellent condition. Lynn Eisfeld, 24 Cherry Street, Massapequa, New York 11758. (516) 799-4869 or (516) 541-2754.

Complete set of dash, door, and cockpit trim lining for 1961 TR3. All items \$12. Excellent condition. Also any other mechanical parts needed off junker: trans, rear end, TR4 engine, etc. James F. Krupa, 429 E. Marion, Youngstown, Ohio 44507.

TR3—EP—racer 90% complete—best of everything, many trick parts. Ideal, inexpensive beginner's package—includes trailer. Over \$3,000 invested, must sacrifice—\$1,000 or best offer. Michael Spain, 109 Westover Hills, Millport, N.Y. 14864.

WANTED

TR4 surrey top. Write Jim Farrel, Box 728, Brinkley, Arkansas 72021.

Car badges and/or Jacket Patches from local Triumph clubs for the Queenstown Motorbadge Collection in South Africa. Will exchange theirs for yours. Write: Dennis Phleeger, P.O. Box 6934, Grosse Pointe, Michigan 48236.

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
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")	\$.195
"Triumph—50 Years of Sports Car" history poster	\$3.00

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Please make checks payable to British Leyland Motors Inc.

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