

Triumph



Newsletter

TSOA

TRIUMPH SPORTS OWNERS ASSOCIATION



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OCTOBER-NOVEMBER, 1977

SPITFIRE 1500's FIRST, SECOND AND THIRD IN CLASS AT ATLANTA CHAMPIONSHIPS

Tom Collier leads clean sweep in Class F Production: Averages 88.10 mph

The Sports Car Club of America Class F Production National Championship belongs to Triumph again with Tom Collier of Huntington, Long Island, New York, wearing the crown as the result of his win at the SCCA run-offs at Road Atlanta Oct. 28/30, 1977.

Second spot in the FP race at the Champion Classic went to Steven Johnson of Providence, R.I., with Jerry Barker of Cerritos, Calif., third. Collier, Johnson and Barker all drove Spitfire 1500s.

It wasn't easy. There was a four-car shunt on the first turn of the first lap. Ten of the 24 cars which started were out of the race at the half way point, the ninth lap. Crashes eliminated four of them including the pole sitter, Jim Newcombe in a Spitfire. Jack May, who led the second through seventh laps in a Rick Cline-built Spitfire, was also among the retirees.

Mark McCarthy, who had the lead on the first and ninth laps, lost a connecting rod on the tenth, with his brother Mike packing it in on lap twelve. Tom, the third Spitfire-mounted McCarthy in the race, was a fifth lap DNF with gear box problems.

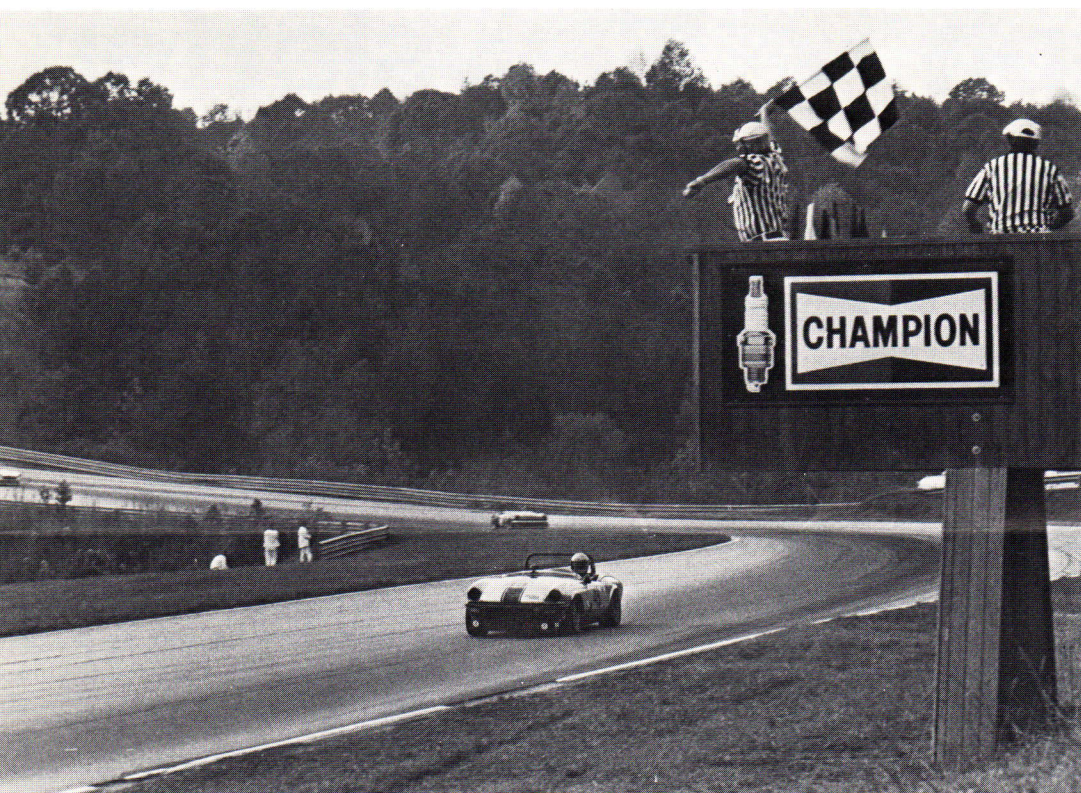
Only ten cars were running at the end of the 30-minute 55-second, 45.36-mile race over the 12-turn Road Atlanta circuit.

The three top finishers came to the grid as follows: Collier seventh with a 1:41.57 qualifying time; Steve Johnson third with a 1:41 fastest lap and Jerry Barker ninth with a 1:42.

Collier was timed at 125 mph on the twelfth lap by a radar gun located on the Road Atlanta back stretch. This was the fastest trap time for any of the cars in the FP race despite the fact that Steve Johnson's Spitfire had the fastest race lap, 90.02 mph.



F-Production was a hectic race with 14 cars eliminated out of 24 starters in the half-hour event by crashes and mechanical problems. Here the winner, Tom Collier's Spitfire 1500 (No. 49), leads a bunch on an early lap, including Jerry Barker's Spitfire 1500 (No. 24) which finished third.



That glorious moment when the winner (Tom Collier's Triumph Spitfire 1500) receives the checkered flag after a hard driven race at Atlanta's wooded circuit. He was timed at 125 mph on the back stretch.

Collier's win gave Spitfire its seventh FP National Championship since 1968, when Brian Fuerstenau won the American Road Race of Champions at Riverside.

Collier's winning car was prepared by Stimola Race Preparation, of Huntington. It is based on the car Ken Slagle campaigned in 1973 and 1974 but is equipped with the later 1,500cc engine and new style body.

The newly-crowned FP champion Thomas Collier is 41, married and has four children. He is a systems engineer with Sperry Rand and a graduate of Villanova. He started racing in 1966 with an Austin Healey, moved to B Produc-

tion with a Corvette and then to a Spitfire. He's made two previous attempts at the Championship, finishing eighth in 1975 and sixth in 1976.

Collier's average race speed was 88.10 mph and his margin of victory over Johnson was 2.45 seconds.

RESULTS—SCCA Class F Production Championship, Atlanta, 1977

1. Tom Collier, Huntington Station, N.Y. (Triumph Spitfire), 88.10 mph
2. Steve Johnson, Providence, R.I. (Triumph Spitfire)
3. Jerry Barker, Cerritos, Calif. (Triumph Spitfire)



Tom Collier's jubilant wife (left), kids and pit crew pile into the Spitfire for his victory lap.

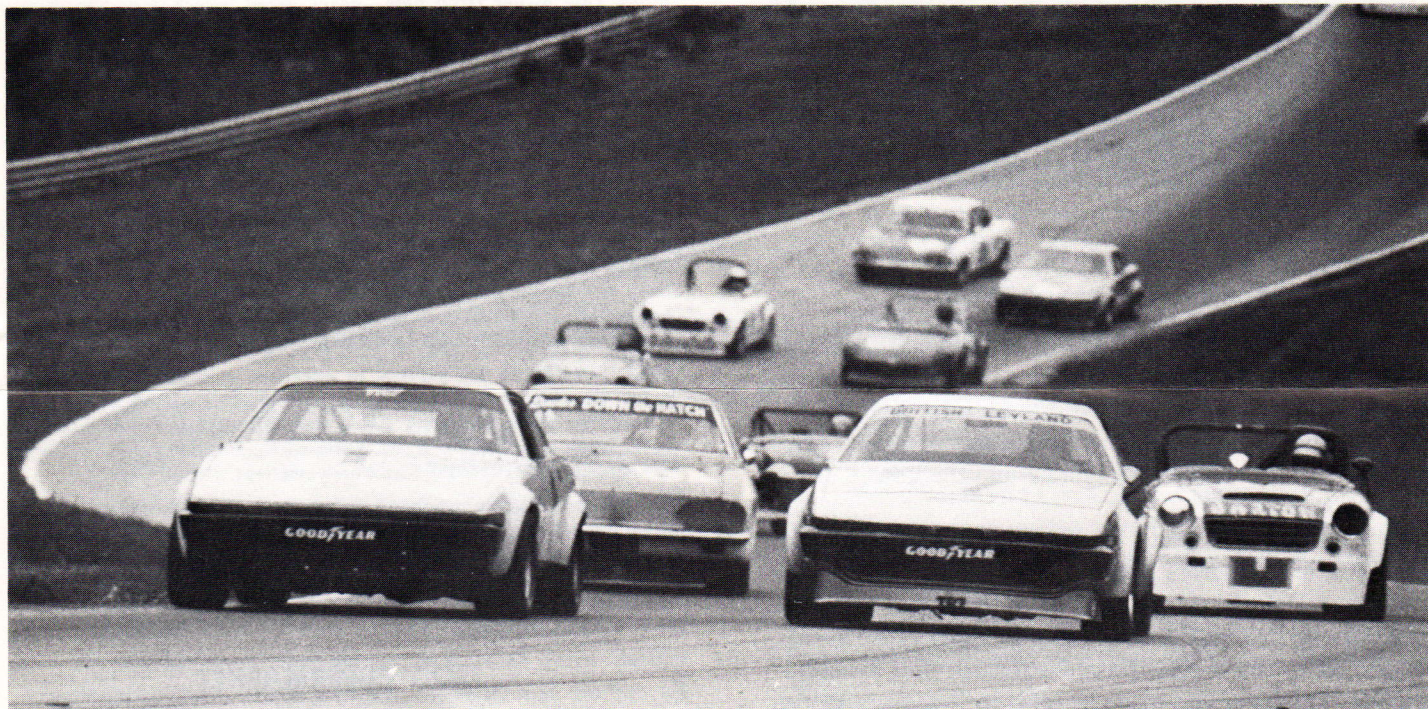


In Victory lane, with Tom Collier (first, and centre), Steve Johnson (second, and left) and Jerry Barker (third, and right) with the welcome party.

(ATLANTA continued)

TRIUMPH TR7s BATTLE FOR D-PRODUCTION CHAMPIONSHIP

Lee Mueller, in an interview, tells the race story: TR7's finish second and third



A dozen cars in close company shortly after the start. The TR7s of Slagle (left) and of Mueller alongside, were on the pole. Slagle had lapped at 92.4 mph. They are chased by Reeve (Yenko Stinger left) and by Tom Brenham (Datsun right), plus others.

"I thought the race was going to be between myself and Jim Reeve (Yenko Stinger), Jim Fitzgerald (Datsun) and Kenny Slagle (Triumph TR7), especially Kenny because he'd shown that he was going to be very fast and hard to beat.

"Tom, well I just shook hands with him on the grid. I'd never heard of him.

"But about half way through the race this little blue rocket came up alongside of me. Tom waved and just motored on by . . ."

That was part of Triumph TR7 driver Lee Mueller's description of the D Production National Championship run-off race at Road Atlanta.

"Tom" is Tom Robertson, the winner. His "little blue rocket" is a Lotus Super 7. Behind Robertson were Mueller with the Huffaker TR7 and Slagle. Reeve was fourth and Fitzgerald blew his engine at the start and retired at the very first turn.

Mueller and Slagle started the race from the first row with Slagle having won the pole with a 92.40 mph lap, a little over two-tenths of a second faster than Mueller. Reeve and Tom Brennan (Datsun) made up the second row. Robertson was grided sixth, 1.3 seconds off Slagle's pace.

Mueller outraged Slagle going into turn one staying in the lead until Robertson caught them early in the tenth lap. Slagle dropped to third. Robertson, Mueller and Slagle stayed in that order all the way to the checkered flag.

Later it became clearer why Robertson was able to win. His Lotus weighs 1,000 pounds less than the TR7 or about half as much. It develops about 125 hp compared to 175 hp for the TR7, which is a lot more than half the TR7's power. Besides having a more favorable power to weight ratio, the Lotus' light weight gave it an advantage in handling particularly on a track bearing traces of oil from twenty preceding races.

"The TR7 and the Lotus use the same size tires but because the Lotus weighs so much less, Tom wasn't so bothered by the oil, while I had to back off. When I didn't I'd start to slide," Mueller explained.

Mueller said he wasn't surprised that a Lotus won. "The question is why one hasn't won before," he said. "Tom's the first man who has put it altogether."

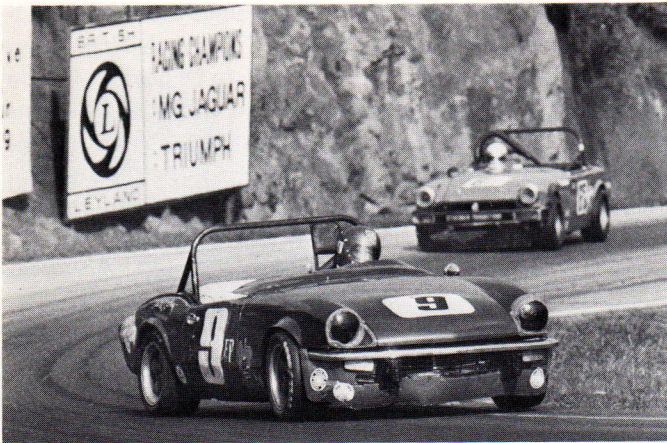
Both Mueller and Slagle said their TR7s ran perfectly during the race and both feel that they drove as well as they could have.

Mueller's finished second in D Production three years in a row now. He was asked if its going to be Lee Mueller in the winner's circle next year. "Well I thought it was going to be Lee Mueller this year. Definitely we ought to win it next year."

—LYMAN GAYLORD

RESULTS—SCCA Class D Production Championship, Atlanta, 1977

1. Tom Robertson, Gales Ferry, Conn. (Lotus Super 7), 92.49 mph
2. Lee Mueller, Lynwood, Calif. (Triumph TR7)
3. Ken Slagle, Harrisburg, Pa. (Triumph TR7)



Tom McCarthy's much battered Spitfire had crashed twice in practice but got to the start; only to retire after five laps.



Mark McCarthy's Spitfire qualified second on the grid and was right up with the leaders when a connecting rod broke.

THE SAGA OF TOM AND MARK AND MIKE...

A whole family of Spitfire racers fall victim to the luck of the game

You've heard how race drivers have to be dedicated to the sport, well . . .

All of a sudden it was 1973 all over again. There was Tom McCarthy's crew with welding torches, crowbars and sledge hammers working late into the night to rebuild Tom's badly crunched Spitfire.

Four years ago it was his GP Spitfire which had crashed in a practice crash. Fixing it took all night but the car was ready by race time and he lowered the class lap record three times before a bearing let go.

This year at the Road Atlanta SCCA run-offs, Tom and his brothers Mark and Mike were ready to blow everybody's doors off with their F Production Spitfires. They'd put in over 200 hours in dyno time on the cars, spent more time and money than ever before on preparation.

It was October 26, 1977, and the FP/EP practice-qualifying session had just started. A racer without brake lights stopped in front of Tom. Avoiding the stopped car, Tom spun and hit the barricade with the right side of the car severely bending the door panel. Back to the pits.

A few minutes later, he was back on the track. On turn 12, an oil fitting broke and he spun in his own oil hitting the tire wall coming to rest off the track. Tom was barely out of the car when a Porsche lost it on the oil and crashed into the Spitfire demolishing its front end.

Brother Mark qualified second. Mike didn't make it to the track; his Spitfire's motor needed changing.

By some miracle, Tom's front suspension survived the crash which was more than could be said for the steering which was completely gone and the front end of the frame which was severely out of shape.

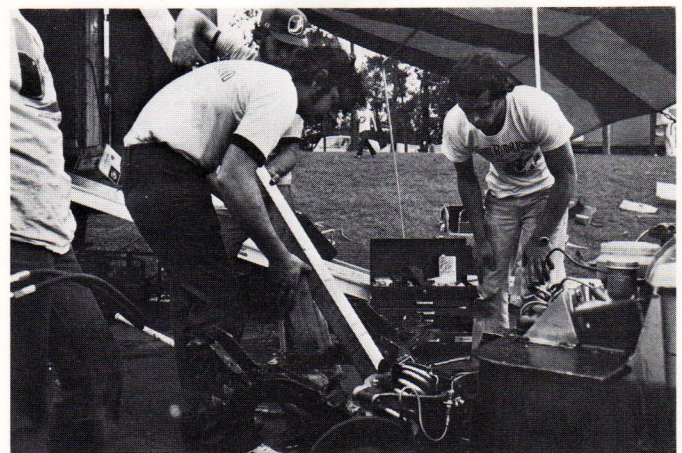
The crew never had any doubt that they'd be able to fix the car. They had seen worse in 1973. With Jim Coan, British Leyland's West Coast competition manager, expediting things, new parts were put on a plane from San Francisco. Part of the crew kept busy with the engine swap

on Mike's car and the rest worked on Tom's. By 11 p.m., they'd finished and a car that any insurance man would have certified "totaled" was ready to race again.

During the Oct. 27 qualifying session, Tom eeked out a 14th spot on the grid saying later that the car didn't want to turn right. Mike was still having problems and was gridded 15th. Mark did better, holding the second grid spot.

On race day, the 29th, Tom thought he had it all together only to lose third gear at the start. He retired on the fifth lap. Mark led the first lap and was in the top three into the ninth lap when a connecting rod broke taking him out of the race. A plug fouled in Mike's car at the start and he dropped out on lap twelve.

The disappointment in the McCarthy camp was obvious but all three brothers were talking about next season before they began the 3,000-mile track back to the San Francisco Peninsula. Winners they weren't but dedicated drivers they remain.



During practice, Tom (left) and Mark McCarthy (right) got down to replacing almost the entire front end of Tom's crashed Spitfire; but to no avail in the race. That's racing!

CLUB NEWS

TR-2/3 Models to Rally in West Virginia Next June

One of the 'Big Three' Triumph annual rallies in the U.S.A. is that organised by the Triumph Register of America (Tri News, Aug/Sept 1977), which was held last June and attracted over fifty TR-2/3 series models. TRA is wisely getting off to an early start and has set Friday June 2 through Sunday June 4, 1978, as the dates of next year's TRA National Meeting to be held at the Blackwater Falls State Park Lodge near Davis, West Virginia. For more information write Skip Marsh, Secretary, Triumph Register of America, 311 Johnson St. S.W., Vienna, Virginia 22180 (tel: 703-821-5389). "Schedule part of your family or individual vacation time to include the Meeting now," he urges. Programme includes parts sales and swaps, technical workshops, concours, banquet, discussions, area tour, etc.

Two new TRA Centers have been formed in Pennsylvania. They are Lehigh Valley Center TRA, Thomas Kennedy, President, 1225 Broad St., Apt. 9, Whitehall, Pa. 18052; and Western Pennsylvania Centre TRA, Ed Woods, Secretary, 3125 Deerwood Drive, Allison Park, Pa. 15101.

Triumph Results—New Hope, Pa. Concours (Aug. 1977)

Non-TR Triumphs

- 1—1973 Stag, Grant Wright, Lahaska, Pa.
- 2—1953 Renown, Richard Langworth, Hopewell, N.J.
- 3—1963 Vitesse, Charlie Frick, Philadelphia, Pa.

TR2 and TR3

- 1—1963 TR3A, Jack Stern, Hawthorne, N.J.
- 2—1957 TR3, Doug Kegerise, Cornwells Heights, Pa.
- 3—1962 TR3A, Bruce Wyatt, Southampton, Pa.

TR4, TR4A and TR250

- 1—1968 TR250, John Crankshaw, Hightstown, N.J.
- 2—1967 TR4A IRS, John Leonard, Yardley, Pa.
- 3—1967 TR4A, Barbara Langworth, Hopewell, N.J.

Best Overall

1960 TR3A, Ellen & John Manning, Flourtown, Pa.

Standard-Triumph International Rally 1978

The Vintage Triumph Register is planning a ten-day tour of Britain next year, centering around the third Standard-Triumph International Rally (see Triumph Newsletter, June/July) on September 16-17, 1978, to be held at Weston Park, Shifnal, Shropshire. Between 20 and 35 enthusiasts will be accommodated on the tour, which is based on this year's successful two-week tour of England by the Packard Club. (Tour host Richard M. Langworth is editor and publisher of both clubs' magazines.)

VTR hopes to offer a complete package including round-trip air fare, all hotels, etc. for between \$650 and \$750 per person. For details send a postcard to VTR Tour, 20 Hart Ave., Hopewell, N.J. 08525.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

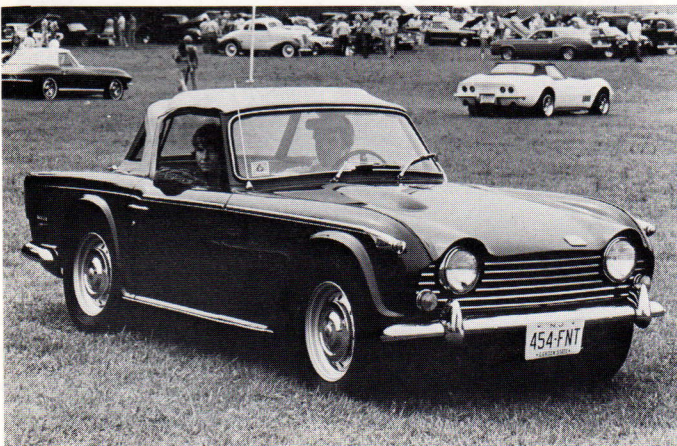
TR7 Holds Camping Gear and 10-Speeds for Two

"I love my TR7. I have nearly 12,500 happy miles on it and am looking forward to many more. I just completed repairs to the front suspension made necessary by my hitting a large pothole this past winter. I am impressed with the serviceability of the car. It was obviously designed with the repair person in mind. If only Detroit could do that! Reading my service log will show that I have spent many hours working on the Triumph. Maintenance is part of the joy of a sports car, and for me part of owning any vehicle. The TR7 is a pleasure to work on.

The car attracts quite a bit of attention. On a recent camping trip in Vermont, I think I may have sold a few to people who came up to us and inquired about it. In fact, my wife and I think you should run an ad showing just how much stuff you can get into that car. We had all our camping gear packed and our ten-speeds were carried upside-down on a rack attached to the trunk lid. It made quite a picture rolling along the highway and more than once people turned to watch.

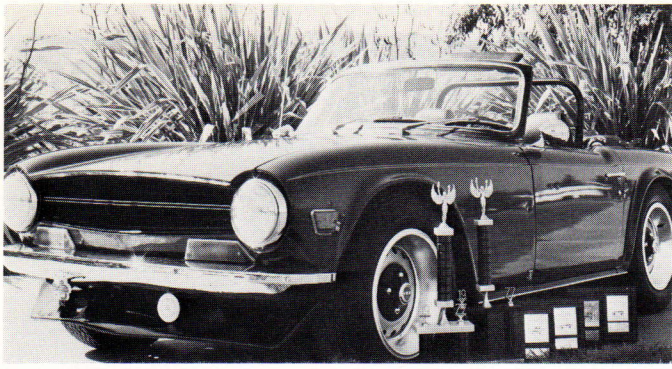
I have never owned a car that was as pleasant to drive, especially on trips."

—William Phelps, Poughkeepsie, N.Y.



Triumphs had a Concours of their own at the big New Hope, Pa., meet in August. Among those successful, John Crankshaw's 1968 TR250 and Charlie Frick's 1963 Vitesse.

CLUB NEWS (Continued)



Here is Ed Lacina's 1971 TR6 with some of the trophies he has won in Autocross, etc.

Autocross Preparation Help Through TSOA

"I would like to thank TSOA for making itself available to Triumph enthusiasts. After having a poor 1976 autocross season, I requested technical information through TSOA. This plea for help resulted in several letters of advice. Over the year, my '71 TR6 was modified and the advice of experience was taken.

As a result, at this year's Northern California Sports Car Olympics, my autocross placement was 4th in class, much better than 18th the prior year. This along with a 3rd in the Concours and overall good scoring in three other events, enabled me to be awarded 10th overall and "Best Triumph" trophies. The latter was made possible by Peninsula British Cars, Palo Alto, Ca.

Needless to say, I enjoyed this Labor Day weekend. My thanks to Lee Matas and D C. Dieger for their informative letters."

Ed Lacina, Los Gatos, Calif.

(Ed Lacina's original appeal for technical advice was published in Tri News, Sept/Oct 1976, and it is gratifying to learn that he not only heard from other readers but used their experience to such good advantage in 1977. How about a short article, Ed, to pass on your experiences and lessons to some more Triumph autocross buffs?—Editor)

TECHNICAL NOTE

New Interior Lighting for Triumph TR7

An interesting running production change in 1977 models of Triumph TR7 has taken place this fall. The detachable map light, with flexible lead, fitted between the bucket seats on the rear bulkhead has been changed to interior lights fitted to each door just below the window level.

CLASSIFIED

FOR SALE

TR6 roll bar and padding kit, new never used, \$75. Chrome plated valve cover, original equipment, excellent shape, \$25. Steering wheel, excellent condition, \$10. Instruments, complete set, '73, \$30. Spare tire well cover and carpeting, \$15. Rear interior padding, \$5. Jack Mohan, 294-A Murray Drive, King of Prussia, Pa. 19406. (215) 337-1539.

2 TR3s. 1—1957 TR3, small grille. Rough but restorable. 1—1960 TR3A parts car. Plus some spares. Sell as package, \$300 firm. Don

C. Harrington, Box 193, Apple Creek, Ohio 44606. (216) 698-4802 after 5:30 p.m.

1964 Triumph Sports-Six or Vitesse-6. Mileage 62,127. Body and engine good condition; rocker panels need repair—minor work on frame. Will accept best offer over \$725. Jim Silberhorn, 116 N. Scott St., Adrian, Mich. 49221. (517) 263-2473 home; 263-2104 ext. 277 work.

1965 TRIUMPH TR-4A IRS. \$4,500 firm. Conifer Green. 55,000 miles. One owner from new—never raced, wrecked or run during winters. Engine blueprinted and modified by S.A.H. Accessories, Leighton Buzzard, Bedfordshire, England. 135 BHP, 11.6-1 C.R. E. C. Morton, Jr., Four Mile Run, Ticonderoga, New York 12883. (518) 585-7224.

1973 STAG. All options except hard top. Low mileage, excellent condition. Red exterior, saddle interior. Make an offer. Max R. Barnes, 1217 Condoover Rd., Richmond, Va. 23229. (804) 233-3013.

Triumph TR-4 Parts. Overdrive transmission, just rebuilt, \$350. TR-4 4:55 positraction rear axle, \$400. TR-3 supercharger, \$100. TR-4 cylinder head, new seats, new guides, with all valves, never been overheated or cracked, \$200. TR-4 aluminum flywheel with bolts, \$80. TR-4 full race camshaft, \$25. TR-3 rear axle, \$80. Call Alan Downs, 2338 Ramm Dr., Anaheim, Cal. 92804. (714) 774-4376.

1953 TRIUMPH RENOWN in excellent condition. Good black paint, fine chrome, beautiful original leather and wood interior. Razoredge styled four-door sedan with TR engine, 111-inch wheelbase. Must sell: \$4,800. R. M. Langworth, 20 Hart Ave., Hopewell, N.J. 08525. (609) 466-1866 (not between Sept. 10 and Oct. 8).

TR-3 & -3A. Most mechanical & some body parts, bonnet, left door, boot lid, all gauges & wiring harness, generator, starter, radiator, transmission, rear end, wire wheels & adaptors, disc wheels, etc. G. H. Coleman, 429 McKinley Ave., N.W., Canton, Ohio 44702. (216) 452-4048.

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
British Leyland Competition Patches (Helmet)	(12 for \$10.00) \$1.00
British Leyland Patches	(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

Send Check or Money Order. No C.O.D.'s please.
Please make checks payable to British Leyland Motors Inc.

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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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