

Triumph Newsletter

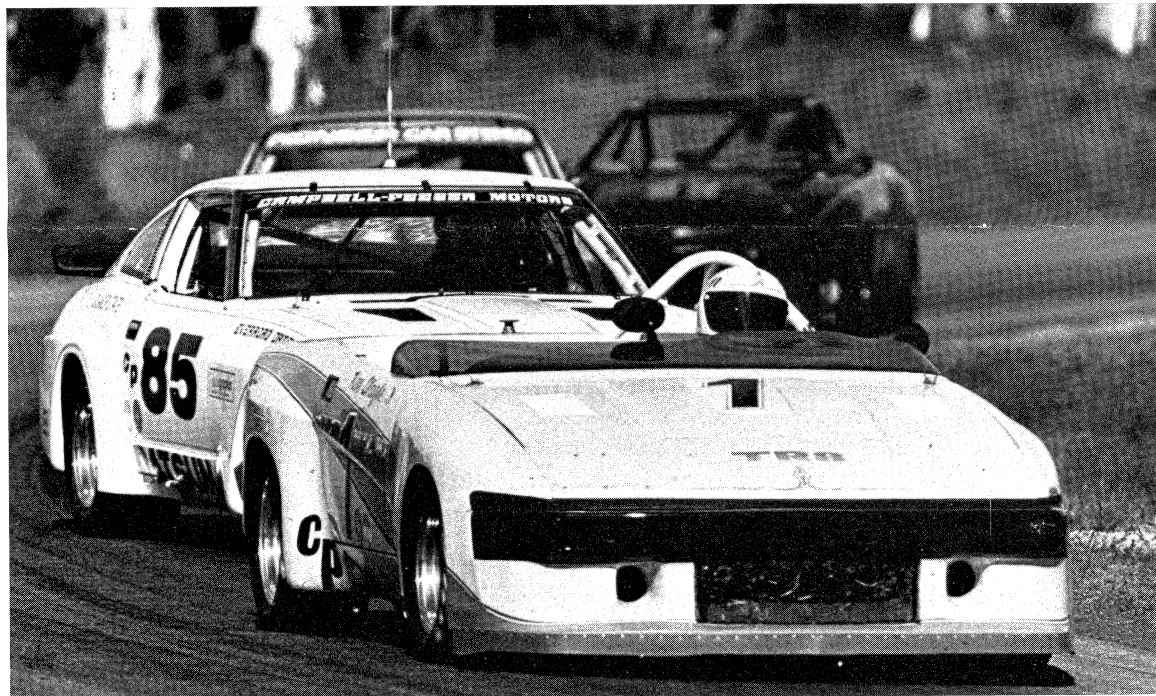


TSOA TRIUMPH SPORTS OWNERS ASSOCIATION



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OCT.-NOV. 1980



Ken Slagle's sleek TR8 convertible leads two Datsuns and Lee Mueller's TR8 during the CP event, before being hit from behind and forced out of the race.

1980 SCCA Road Racing Championships at Atlanta

'Triumph Drivers Drive Hard and Well...'

Jerry Barker's Spitfire 1500 wins F Production Class Championship

Some 500 amateur race car drivers gathered at Road Atlanta in late October to vie for the SCCA driving crowns in 22 classes. When it was over, Triumph drivers had a lot to be proud of.

Triumphs in competition at the scenic 2.52-mile course ran the gamut from TR3s to the latest and most powerful Triumph ever, the TR8. Sprinkled in among that group were a handful of TR7s, a TR6 and a TR4, as well as the usual plethora of Spitfires. And, given the level of competition and the money spent by other teams, the Triumph drivers acquitted themselves well.

* * *

Jerry Barker garnered his second national championship as he swept to victory in the F Production class behind the

wheel of his immaculate Spitfire 1500. Barker, whose father was a popular racer on the West Coast, has not fared well at the runoffs since his 1975 championship. But this year the Californian seemingly could do no wrong as he put his Spit' on the pole and led every one of the 18 laps on his way to victory and the national title.

Fully a third of the FP field was driving Spitfires—the next best Triumph was defending FP champion Steve Johnson who finished fourth. Johnson's week at the Road Atlanta track was just about as disappointing as Barker's was enjoyable, but the 1979 FP champ never gave up as he drove to fourth spot.

It's been a while since the G Production class has seen a Spitfire in victory circle but Travis Duder just about pulled it off with an impressive drive to finish less than two-tenths of a second behind the winning car.

(continued on page 32)

'Triumph Drivers Drive Hard and Well' (continued)



It's "thumbs up" for Jerry Barker, as he takes his father and a friend for a ride on his victory lap after winning F Production.

Triumph's only national champion in 1980 is Jerry Barker, who started first in his Spitfire and led all the way in the F Production race.

One of the highlights of the weekend was certainly Denny Wilson's inspired performance behind the wheel of his Triumph TR6. Wilson qualified sixth for the D Production race, just behind Lee Mueller in the Huffaker-prepared TR7. When the green flag came out, pole sitter Doc Bundy in the Porsche 924 grabbed an immediate lead but Wilson was just as quick on the trigger and barreled into second spot; Mueller's start left him trailing the leaders.

In a totally unexpected performance (except perhaps by Wilson himself) the TR6 hounded the leader mercilessly for the entire length of the race, even managing to lead on occasion. As Wilson continued to show little respect for the Stuttgart machine, Mueller was fast closing the deficit and by the time the last five laps arrived it was an unholy war for first, second, and third place between the 924, the TR6, and the TR7.

The duel to the finish was spoiled, however, by slower traffic encountered as the trio came down the hill toward the start/finish line two laps from the end. The Porsche was able to get by with ease but the Triumphs had to follow the slower cars through the last turn on the course before finding room to pass. Bundy knew this was his only hope and set the fastest lap of the race on the final and 18th circuit, leaving the Triumphs in second and third with Wilson's TR6 nipping Mueller's TR7 for runner-up honors.

For his incredible performance, Wilson was awarded the Road Racing Driver's Club "Mark Donohue" Award for outstanding performance at the event. The trophy consists of a table made from the wheel of a Can Am car and a glass top inscribed with the honors bestowed. The award is one of the most coveted in all of SCCA racing and Wilson was the fitting recipient for 1980.

Two other TR7 convertibles made their first Champion Spark Plug Road Racing Classic appearances this year. Bob Griffith, the 1979 G Production national champion, is now

behind the wheel of a TR7 and drove a steady race to finish in ninth spot. Dan Pohlabel started eighth in his TR7 but had mechanical problems and retired after completing eight laps.

* * *

The E Production race went to another JRT product (an MGB) but one of the most exciting aspects of the race was the performance of two Triumph TR3s running in the top ten among the best EP cars in the nation. The leader of this group was the perennial Hardy Prentice, who came to Road Atlanta as the Northern Pacific division champion in EP! Hardy finished in seventh spot and only two notches ahead of Dan Hughey in another TR3... Hughey was the last car on the lead lap when the checker fell. Jack Wheeler brought his TR4 home in 11th spot, completing 17 laps.

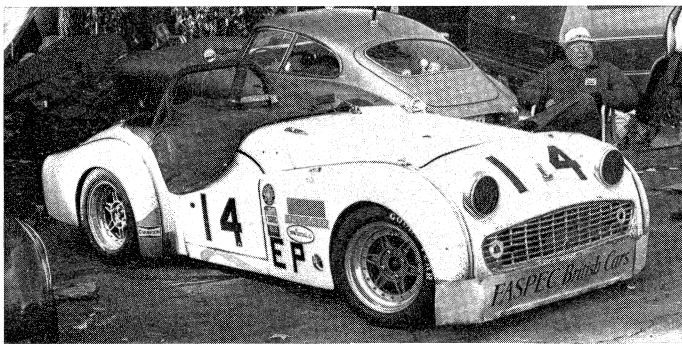
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The big shoot-out of the weekend was the C Production event with defending champion Paul Newman leading the onslaught of Datsun Z cars. Ken Slagle, Lee Mueller, and Bruce Qvale all had TR8 convertibles on hand, and Ron Hunter had one of the original TR8 coupes. But nobody was prepared to deal with the Jaguar E-type of Freddy Baker!

Baker stunned the troops by putting the veteran Jag on the pole, with Slagle's fleet yellow machine qualifying fourth as the fastest Triumph. Mueller was seventh on the grid, Qvale eighth, and Hunter 13th.

To the amazement of everybody watching the premier race of the weekend, the second fastest qualifier—a Datsun—appeared to run the Jag off the road as they got the green flag. The fender-banging continued through the first half of the course until Baker was able to pull out a bit of a lead, which he held all the way until the checkered flag.

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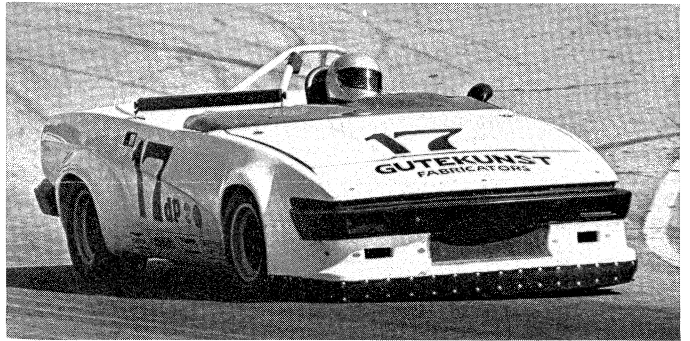
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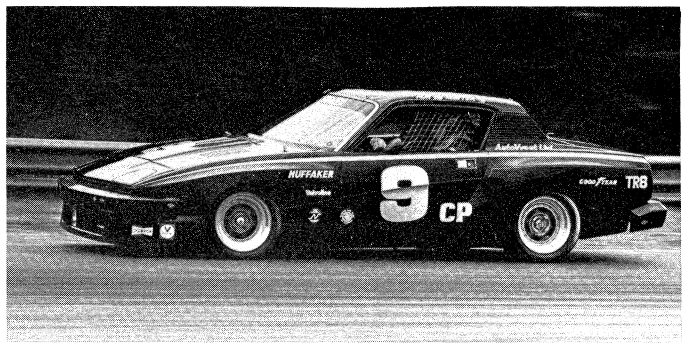
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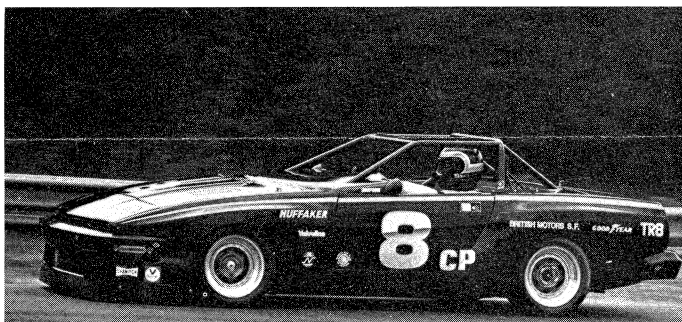
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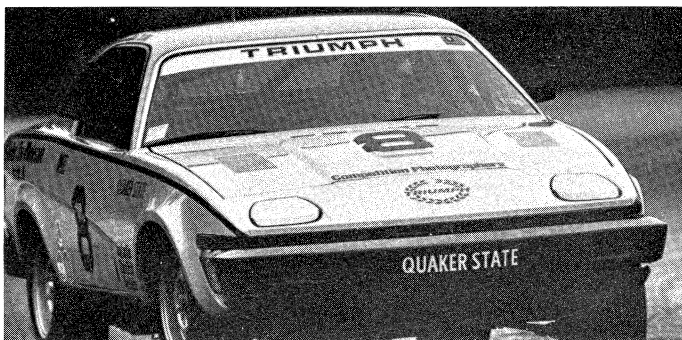
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5.

1. The fastest TR3 in the country belongs to Hardy Prentice, whose father watches over it and the Jaguar E-type tow car in the pits.

2. Trying hard in his TR7, J. D. Martin completed all 18 laps of the Showroom Stock race and finished 17th.

3. Dan Pohlbel's TR7 was beautifully prepared but had problems during the D Production race and retired.

4. The only TR8 coupe in production class racing was driven by Ron Hunter, who finished in 10th spot after a three-car tangle in the C Production race.

5. Driving his usual cool and steady race, Pete Paxton brought his TR7 home in ninth place in the Showroom Stock B event.

6. A TR6 came close to winning the D Production title again as Denny Wilson drove his TR6 to second place and the RRDC award for outstanding performance in the annual amateur racing event.

7. Moving up to the faster D Production class this year, Bob Griffith took his new TR7 convertible to ninth place in the race.

8. Bruce Qvale showed that he is an up-and-coming young driver with a nice drive to sixth place with his TR8 in the C production event.

'Triumph Drivers Drive Hard and Well' (continued)

Meanwhile, Slagle was busy picking off the Datsuns and worked himself into second spot with the TR8 as he came by the start/finish line on the eighth lap. Just as he passed the pits he was hit smartly in the left rear by the third place Datsun driver, who apparently misjudged his clearance in a pass attempt. The bump spun the TR8 90-degrees and sent it directly into the tire wall along the pit straight. It hit—*hard*—and bounced back into the center of the track.

Slagle was shaken in the accident and the rest of the field managed to get by the car without incident; Ken lifted himself from the car and was checked over by the doctors who pronounced him fit except for some bruises and sore muscles. Later it was found he had suffered a fractured sternum.

After the event the officials contemplated both incidents and wound up disqualifying the car which had metal-to-metal contact with the Jag in addition to suspending the driver's competition license; the Datsun driver who hit Slagle's car also received a suspension but kept his fourth place finish.

The Huffaker-prepared TR8s of Mueller and Qvale finished fifth and sixth as Hunter brought home the TR8 coupe in 10th spot after tangling with two other cars late in the race.

* * *

This is the first year the TR7 has competed in the Showroom Stock B class and while it has been competitive at most tracks, both Pete Paxton and J. D. Martin found the course not suited to the TR7's gear ratios. Mazda swept seven of the top eight spots as Paxton drove his usual cool race to ninth spot. Martin finished 17th, still on the lead lap, to show you how competitive the showroom stock cars are. Paxton will move into the fastest showroom stock class, SSA, next year behind the wheel of a TR8.

It was, then, a mixed bag at the 1980 CSPRRC but, as always, Triumph drivers drove hard and well and were rewarded with several good finishes and great personal satisfaction.

G.H.

SCCA CHAMPIONSHIP RESULTS—Triumph Car Placings Road Atlanta, Georgia, Oct. 26/28 1980

CP Production

Won by Fred Baker (Jaguar E-type) 98.09 mph. Triumph car placings included 5. Lee Mueller (TR8), 6. Bruce Qvale (TR8), 10. Ron Hunter (TR8).

DP Production

1. Doc Bundy (Porsche 924) 93.59 mph.
2. Dennis Wilson (Triumph TR6).
3. Lee Mueller (Triumph TR7).

Other Triumph car placings included 9. Bob Griffith (TR7).

EP Production

Won by Paul Brand (MGB) 91.18 mph. Triumph car placings included 7. Hardy Prentice (TR3), 9. Dan Hughey (TR3), 11. Jack Wheeler (TR4).

FP Production

1. Jerry Baker (Spitfire) 89.15 mph.
2. Gary Small (Volvo P1800)

3. Larry Moulton (Turner Roadster).

4. Steven Johnson (Spitfire).

Other Triumph placings included; 6. Mark Mercer (Spitfire), 9. Ed Amonsens (Spitfire), 18. Bill Davis (Spitfire), 19. Mark Van Orsdale (Spitfire), 23. Tom McCarty (Spitfire).

GP Production

1. Steve Schwitters (Alfa Romeo) 83.49 mph.

2. Travis Duder (Spitfire).

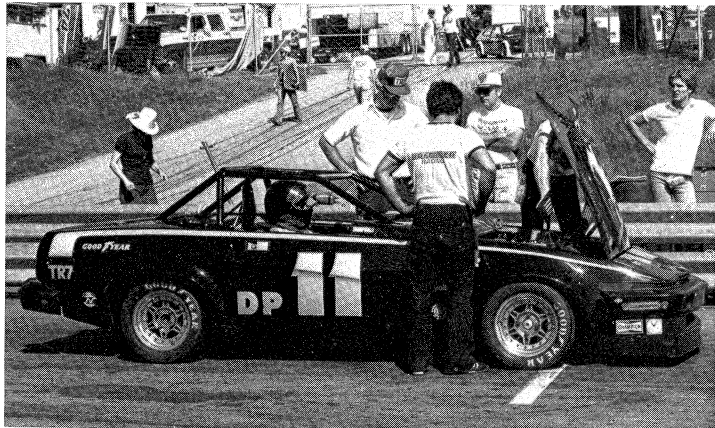
3. Al James (Datsun 1600).

4. Dennis Gernet (MG Midget).

Other Triumph car placings included 8. John Stanford (Spitfire), 21. Ray Evans (Spitfire).

Showroom Stock B

Won by Ron Christensen (Mazda RX3) 78.1 mph. Triumph car placings included 9. Pete Paxton, (TR7), 17. J. D. Martin (TR7).

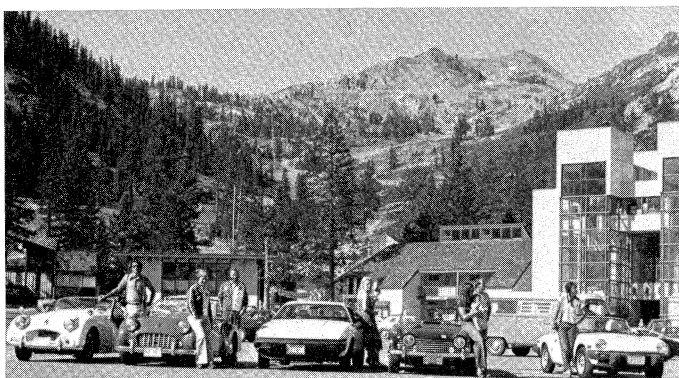


The Huffaker crew (Joe Huffaker is in the TR8 cap) makes some adjustments to defending champion Lee Mueller's TR7 prior to the D Production qualifying session.



It was double-duty for Lee Mueller as he ran in both D Production and C Production; he is shown here in action in the CP TR8.

CLUB NEWS:



In the wild West, five of the Triumphs on the Lake Tahoe Tour. (L to R) Craig Enge's TR2; Larry and Karen May's TR3; Mary LaVern's TR7; Kathy Schegg's TR250, and Mary Ann LaVern's Spitfire.

North West Group joins with Bay Area club for Nevada Meet

Over the Labor Day holidays, the TYEE Triumph Club from the state of Washington held the first of what it hopes will become an annual Tour to Lake Tahoe, Nevada. Five different Triumphs—TR2, TR3, TR6, TR7 and Spitfire 1500 arrived late on the Saturday night in Squaw Valley, California, after hundreds of top-down miles from the North.

Sunday morning was clear and warm and the group then scattered in different directions. The TR2 and TR3 joined with a local TR250 and became arm-chair racers as they watched the autocross event of the Sports Car Olympics, an annual event in the Lake Tahoe area.

In the evening they all congregated at Leon and Kathy Schegg's home in Truckee, where "Road Racing's White Wave" and "Success by Design—the TR Series" were screened and margaritas were consumed courtesy of the Bay Area Triumph Assoc. The group consisted of Laurie and Craig Enge (1955 TR2), Larry and Karen May (1957 TR3), Leon and Kathy Schegg (1968 TR250), Mary Kelly (1976 TR6), Mary LaVern (1978 TR7), and Mary Ann LaVern (1979 Spitfire).

The next day the group drifted slowly home, some by rather roundabout routes but all with one common idea—to do it all again in 1981.

L.S.

72 Triumphs at North New Jersey Club's September Meet

Hazy, hot, humid, summer-like weather helped the first Northeast Triumph Gathering, Concours & Picnic attract an excellent entry of 72 Triumphs. Organized by the North New Jersey Triumph Assoc. and supported by the Long Island Triumph Assoc., the meeting was held at Schooley's Mountain Park in Long Valley, NJ.

The intent was to hold a low key, good time, minimum hassle event, by using a peer ballot method of judging the Concours. This left everyone free to enjoy themselves, look over all the cars, picnic and talk about Triumphs all day.

A TR8 convertible, driven out by Glenn Howell of JRT, generated a great deal of interest. For most people, it was the first TR8 they had seen. A few lucky ones had an opportunity to drive it and were impressed with its performance. The velvet smooth feel of the engine in a car like the TR is an unusual

combination for those of us that grew up in the era when the term 'sports car' was usually synonymous with four cylinders and rough idle.

The second Northeast Triumph Gathering will be absorbed into the July 1981 national meet of the VTR. Contact; Bill Sohl, 29 Netcong Road, Budd Lake, NJ 07828 (201-691-8116).

B.S.



Five of the six first place cars and their owners at the North Jersey club's September meet.

RESULTS

Concours, 21 September 1980, North New Jersey, Association.

TR2, 3, 3A, 3B Class: 1. Rich Pedersen (1963 TR3B)

TR4, 4A, 250 Class: 1. Al Stryeski (1966 TR4A)

TR6 Class: 1. Joe Ciulla (1976)

TR7, 8 Class & Post 1975 Spitfires: 1. John Carlone (1980 TR7)

GT6 & early Spitfires: 1. Jeff Miller (1967 GT6)

Four-Seaters Class: 1. Matt Pagano (1973 Stag)

Longest Distance: George Barczewski (1974 TR4) from Salisbury, Maryland.

Vintage Triumph Register announces National Convention for July 1981

The 1981 National Convention of the Vintage Triumph Register has been set for July 23-26, 1981 in the Eastern Pennsylvania (Pocono) area. The four-day event will include speed exercises, technical seminars, concours, and a flea market. It is open to all Triumph owners. Co-chairmen are Steven Rossi, VTR president, and Bill Sohl, local affairs director. Assistant chairmen are Doug Hitzig of the Long Island chapter and Al Stryeski. On a recent trial run, this team chose the Holiday Inn at Bartonsville near Stroudsburg, as HQ. It even has an indoor swimming pool.

The VTR is introducing a new bi-monthly newsletter for topical club news and their magazine, *The Vintage Triumph*, will become a feature quarterly. Contact: The Vintage Triumph Register, PO Box 36477, Grosse Pointe, Michigan 48236.

Sixth Annual Triumph Challenge Rally announced for August 1981

An important Triumph event next summer is the North American Triumph Challenge (VI), sixth in the annual series. It will be hosted by the Detroit Triumph Sports car Club, according to Penny Wallace, editor of their well-produced, pocket-size *Triumph Review*. The dates are August 13-16, 1981, and they are considering Windsor, Ontario, as the venue, to make it a truly North American event. The NA Triumph Challenge already has five years of continuity and is growing in importance all the time. Contact: Richard Lamb, president, Detroit Triumph Sports car Club, (313) 641-9089.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR:



Concours Condition Spitfire

"Enclosed are photographs of my Carmine 1973 Spitfire. This automobile was a Concours class co-winner at the recent NATC V in Ottawa, Illinois. . . . The car is very clean and I believe it to be one of the finer examples of a 1973 Spitfire in the Midwest.

I am looking for a 1973 Spitfire Owners Manual and a Passport to Service booklet. Could you steer me in the proper direction to find these?"

Herb J. Hummer, Sterling Heights, Mich. 48077

[Owners' Manuals may be ordered through Triumph dealers. Part number for the Spitfire 1973 Manual is, for instance, 545 189/73.—Ed.]

STAG V8 Information Needed

"Keep up the good work in your Newsletter, excellent job. I recently purchased a '73 Stag and am quite proud of it. Although I have owned a 1976 TR6, the Stag is more to my liking by far. If you have any old Newsletters on it, sales photos, etc., I would greatly appreciate whatever you might furnish."

R. E. Rogers, Jr.

13900 Cooper Orbit Cove, Little Rock, Arkansas 72201



(The most recent article about Stag was titled "Farewell to a Stag" by the Editor in the May/June 1976 Triumph Newsletter. We still do not know of any Triumph Stag owners club.—Ed.)



How Many Triumph Owners are Engineers?

". . . The one thing that never fails to amaze me is the character of Triumph drivers. By profession I am an engineer and as it turned out (at Lake Tahoe) so is Larry May of the TYEE club. Our approach to cars, their care and feeding is remarkably similar. The President of the Bay Area TR Assn. is also an engineer and a close personal friend. Does all this mean something?

Well as a TR owner since I got my driver's license some 14 years ago, I am both a fan of the marque and a qualified critic. Living as I do outside a metropolitan area, the quality and level of support has left something to be desired, Were it not for club affiliations and mail order parts houses, I doubt any repair could take place in a timely manner. . . . But I enjoy the product and I offer my thanks to JRT for their assistance. . . ."

Leon C. Schegg, Tahoe City, Calif.

(See also Club News for Leon Schegg's Tahoe Tour report.—Ed.)

CLASSIFIED ADS

FOR SALE

TWO TR250's. One driveable and one parts car. Also parts too numerous to mention, \$2,000, takes all. Call or write Kevin B. Harris, 321 E. Second St., Morehead, Kentucky 40351. (606) 783-1041.

OWNERS MANUALS: Triumph Sports Car (TR2) first edition printing, cover in poor condition but otherwise good, \$15.

Triumph Sedan (948cc) 1958/9, good condition, \$10.

Triumph Herald Sedan (April 1960 printing), good condition, \$10. All prices include postage in US.

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(Founded 1956)

EDITOR: JOHN F. DUGDALE

Regular Contributors: Mike Cook, Lyman Gaylord, Dick Langworth; Photography, Bill Oursler, Dan Rubin.

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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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