

Triumph Newsletter



TSOA

TRIUMPH SPORTS OWNERS ASSOCIATION



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SEPTEMBER-NOVEMBER, 1979

Lee Mueller Wins National Racing Championship with TR7

GAINESVILLE, Ga. Oct. 31:—Driving the Huffaker Engineering Triumph TR7 convertible, Lee Mueller of Westminster, Ca., captured the Sports Car Club of America D Production race and national class title at the SCCA championship run-off at Road Atlanta, Oct. 28.

Mueller led the race from flag to flag besting a large field of Lotus Super Sevens, Porsches, Alfas and Yenko Stingers. The win gave Mueller his fifth SCCA National Championship.

Also in the winner's circle with a Triumph was Steve Johnson of Providence, Rhode Island, new class champion with a Spitfire 1500 in F Production.

A WINNING COMBINATION FROM CALIFORNIA

The inside story, by Mike Cook

(Mike Cook is corporate public relations manager of Jaguar Rover Triumph Inc. He joined Triumph's original American company in 1958)

Joe Huffaker is a quiet, technically-minded man, not likely to be a student of the occult or believe in good-luck charms. Yet, it was no accident that Lee Mueller's championship-winning TR7 convertible was painted glistening black and bore number 11 on its doors.

Joe Huffaker's SCCA national title winners have nearly always been black with number 11. Two Jensen-Healeys and one MG Midget have come out of the Huffaker shops to wins at Road Atlanta and Joe was not about to hurt the TR7's chances by ignoring precedent.

Of course, Lee Mueller had won national titles before he drove for Huffaker Engineering: in 1965 at the wheel of an HP Sprite and in 1969 driving a Kastner-built Spitfire MkIII which wore white and the number 3. But he had chauffeured the Jensen-Healey winners and a black TR7 with the silver numbers somehow seemed just right for Road Atlanta this year.

TR8 and TR7 Coupes

To get the new car ready for Lee's attempt at the title was a rush program all the way. The Huffaker team had started its 1979 effort with the TR8, one driven by Mueller and a second built for independent driver Bruce Qvale. Both drivers had one win and a couple of other places when, in



Race car constructor Joe Huffaker (right) with his champion driver Lee Mueller.

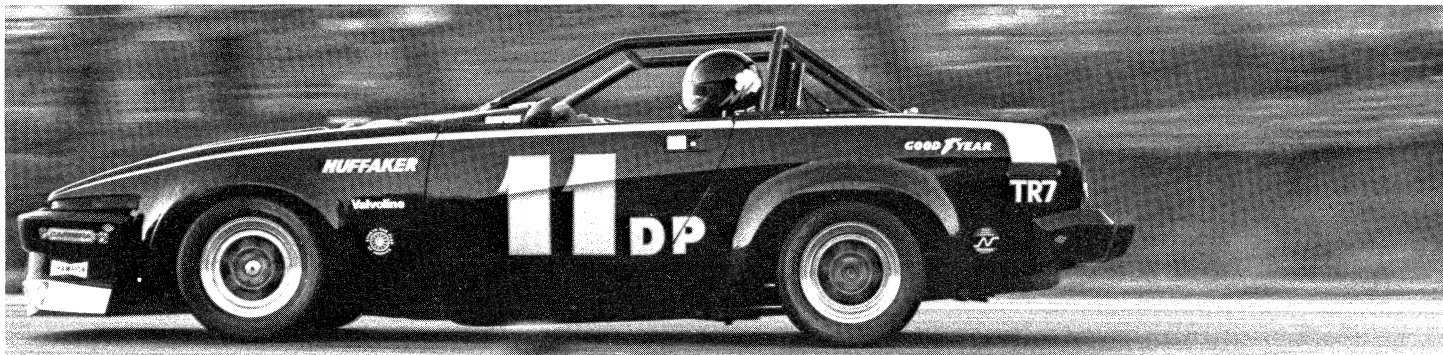
July, the TR8 was dropped from C Production due to insufficient cars built to meet the SCCA's production minimum. Fortunately the team still had the 1978 TR7 D Production coupe on hand and, with the blessing of J R T Inc., Lee and another driver, Joe Carr, set out to qualify. Despite their late-season start, Carr won the Northern Pacific divisional title and Lee was runner-up, putting both into DP at the run-offs.

Racing TR7 Convertible

While the TR7 coupe was getting a rigorous workout from the two drivers, the Huffaker shop was humming along on the new convertible. Actually production car number one (serial 500001), it had been handed over at about the beginning of August and was not ready for track-testing until early October, a couple of weeks before the run-offs. Pronounced serviceable after a test session at Sears Point raceway, the car was loaded, with its team-mate, the silver coupe, and sent on the way to Georgia.

Building a race car from a complete vehicle is a tough project. Much extra time is spent just removing the creature comforts that the street driver is used to and getting the car

A Winning Combination from California (continued)



The championship TR7 convertible had a safety cage suiting the line of the car.

back down to the basics for the racer. Doing it on a model that has not been race-prepared before involves much cut-and-try as the builder finds the best ways to deal with the car's construction. Huffaker elected to install a full roll cage for safety and chassis rigidity. It is a measure of his workmanship that the cage follows the lines of the car, creating a pleasing visual effect while losing none of its utilitarian contribution to the vehicle's performance and safety.

Race Preparation Against Time

So much detail goes into a racing car these days that the biggest enemy Joe's crew had was time. Building extra engines, re-wiring, plumbing the car for fuel and fire-extinguisher systems, welding body seams for extra strength, waiting for special components made by outside firms . . . all of these caused agonizing hold-ups as installation of one set of components waited for the arrival of others.

But eventually it was done and arrived in Georgia in time for the J R T test day the Friday prior to the run-offs. After testing there was a weekend of fine-tuning suspension and mechanical components preparatory to actual race practice which began on Monday. In the second Monday session, **disaster!** A C Production car, practicing in the same group with the TR7s, cut sharply across Lee's nose. Caught between the 280Z and the guard rail, Lee had no place to go and watched the other car crush the left front corner of the TR.

Back in the paddock, Huffaker's experts got onto the bodywork and by qualifying time on Wednesday the car was more than ready. Lee set fastest time that day and lost the pole position by mere tenths on Thursday. The compression of a year's building effort into a couple of months had paid off. The TR7 convertible was ready for the championships with everything going for it. Top construction by Huffaker Engineering, top driver in Lee Mueller and, just for luck, No. 11 and that sleek black paint job. The combination paid off.

SCCA 1979 CHAMPIONSHIP RESULTS

Road Atlanta, Georgia, Oct. 18-22, 1979

D Production

1. Lee Mueller (Triumph TR7), won at 93.3 mph by .49 sec.
2. Pete LoBianco (Lotus Super Seven)
3. Greg LaCava (Porsche)

How Mueller Won

When it comes to the national championships, consistency and ability are the essentials and Lee Mueller brought a plentiful supply of both to Road Atlanta this year. After three years of racing the TR7 and coming up without a championship victory he was ready.

While the newly-built Huffaker Engineering TR7 convertible instantly showed itself to be a good race car, it was no guaranteed winner. What had held Lee back from the first place finish in the past was the weight, frontal area and aerodynamics of the TR7 coupe. The convertible had to meet the same weight; although the handling was undoubtedly improved because the windshield and roof structure were removed, the full roll cage did add drag and there was no additional power. So it was back to driving skill.

In qualifying, Lee set fastest time on the first day. On the 2nd day, Pete LoBianco slid his Lotus in front by tenths to take the pole. It would be TR7 vs. Lotus this time. The Datsuns and Porsche 924s qualified 'way behind and were unlikely to improve position during the race.

On race day, at sunset, the two black cars barely caught the light as the field came down the hill towards the starter. Both drivers floored it an instant too soon and the yellow flag came out . . . no start. The field crept around another lap and this time came down in better order. The green flag waved and it was a drag race to the first turn.

Lee Mueller's favorite quote on how to win a race is "Take an early lead and extend it." From the point of view of the crowd on the pit straight, that's exactly what he did but no more than a few feet at a time. Every lap, the TR7 would emerge ahead of the Lotus under the bridge, hold the lead past the pits and gain further in turn one.

On the rest of the circuit it was a different story. LoBianco would creep within inches of the TR7's rear through the esses and sometimes pass in Turn Five. If not at Five, he would **always** get by at the beginning of the straightaway where the Lotus' light weight and superior acceleration moved it to the front. Two thirds of the way along the straight, Lee would catch up and put the Triumph ahead.

One mistake, by either driver, would have made it a one-car race. The third place car, Greg LaCava's Porsche, was several seconds behind and losing ground. Lee made no mistakes. His final lap followed the same pattern as the first 17 and he led past the waving checker by 49/100 of a second.

TRIUMPH NEWS

Triumph Car Production to Move to Solihull

On September 10, Sir Michael Edwardes, chairman and chief executive of BL Ltd. in England, issued a statement to all employees about proposals to streamline the company. Although BL currently has a strong balance sheet, future financing is the problem for new models 1980 through 1982. He proposed a two-year plan which included closing certain plants and reducing manning levels.

For Triumph the effect would be to cease car assembly at the Canley, Coventry, factory and TR7 and TR8 sports cars would be built in the Solihull (Rover/Land-Rover) works, one of the company's most modern.

On November 1st, the result of a secret ballot of BL's UK employees endorsed the recovery plan, with 87 percent of the returns in favour. The next steps are approvals from the Board and from the UK Government, which holds a 99 percent share in the company; and additional funds must be voted.

Only 11 Convertibles on U.S. Market

In a recent statement to the press, Graham W. Whitehead, president of Jaguar Rover Triumph Inc. stated that the company is "the largest supplier of convertible cars in the United States and dominates the two-seater market. Even ten years ago, there were 50 convertible models available for the U.S. buyer to choose from. This year there were ten. With the recent public introduction of the TR7 convertible* this has now been increased to eleven and four of them are in our product line."

*(see Triumph Newsletter, May/June 1979)

TV Broadcaster Wins Triumph Spitfire

Triumphs are popular as Grand Prizes: This 1979 Spitfire hardtop was the highlight of a drawing at the annual

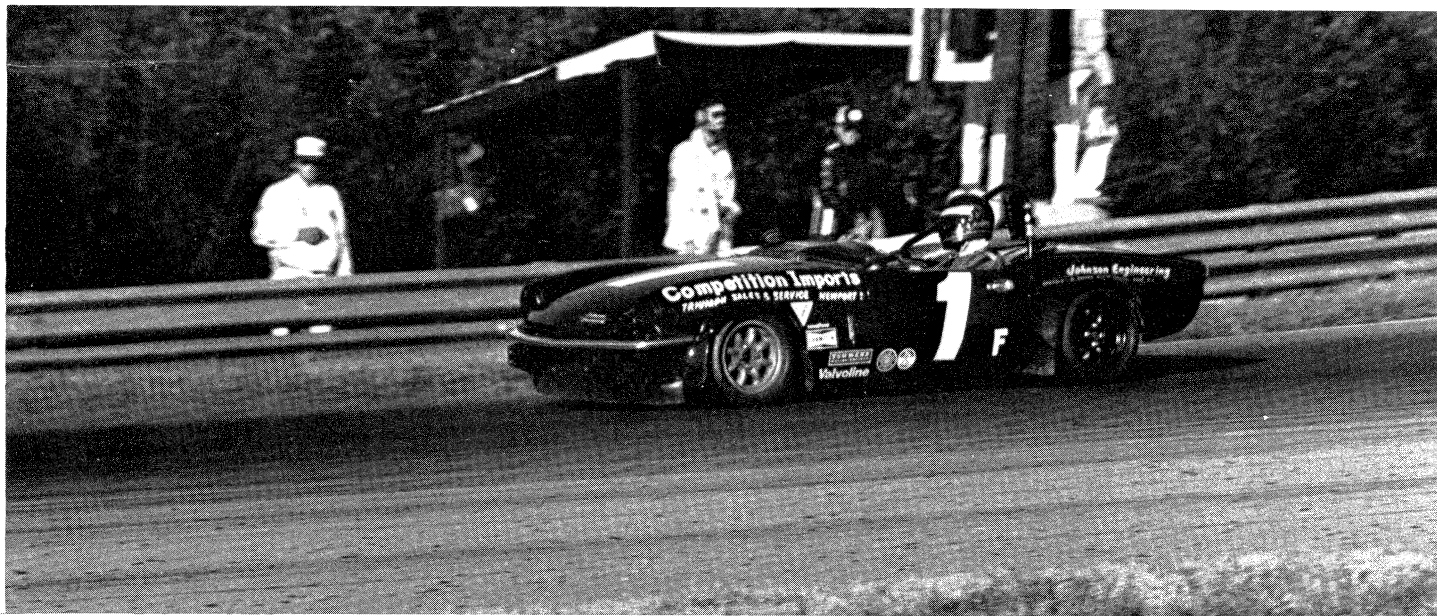
convention of the National Association of Television Program Executives. Open to all employees of TV stations, representative firms and advertising agencies, the winner was John Clark, program director of WHIO-TV of Dayton, Ohio, shown behind the car with his wife. The Spitfire was delivered by dealer Jack Walker of Walker Bros. Imports of Dayton, together with sales manager Denny Egger (far left).



Left to right: 1. Denny Egger. 2. Jack Walker. 3. Mr. & Mrs. John Clark.

Dealer Donates Vintage TR-3 for Auto Museum

In the last issue of the Newsletter, we reported that the Crawford Auto Aviation Museum in Cleveland, Ohio, had raffled off a Triumph TR-3 to help raise funds through the "Friends of the Museum". What we did not know at the time was that the veteran TR was donated by Lee G. Seidman of Jaguar Cleveland Motors, Cleveland Heights, a Jaguar Rover Triumph dealer. It was this donation that enabled the museum to reach its financial goal.



A new SCCA class champion at Atlanta, was Steve Johnson of Providence, driving his Spitfire 1500 in F Production.

TR Register Rallies Again in Ohio!

*Fifth annual meet of veteran Triumphs
attracts excellent following*

The Triumph Register of America held its fifth national meeting June 7-10th at Burr Oak State Lodge in Southeastern Ohio. The theme of this year's meeting was "The Rare Attraction" and indeed it was. The entire lodge was reserved for TRA members, with overflow accommodations at the campground and nearby motels. Nearly 200 participants attended with fifty TR-2's and TR-3's on hand for inspection and admiration.

The "79" meet was extended to four days and began when the registration desk opened on Thursday morning. The scheduled workshops began soon after. They were Frame-up Restoration, Basic Troubleshooting, Advance Troubleshooting and Concours Preparation. Charles Runyen of The Roadster Factory was on hand with a truckload of spares. The parts sale continued throughout the weekend.

Busy Program of Activities

Friday brought many activities including a sunrise tour, which took the early risers through the winding, wooded hills of the area. Rain dampened the beginning of the tour, but it did not dampen the enthusiasm of the participants. The day's activities also included a Boutique sale, a card room for the less enthusiastic, games for the children including a tire rolling Grand Prix and a continuous showing of films.

Saturday was the big event, the Concours d'Elegance. This year's entries were proof of all the hard work and many hours invested to preserve the marque. The many fine cars made the judges' job most difficult. The cars were judged in five classes, and the winners were:

CONCOURS RESULTS

5th National Meeting, Triumph Register of America

June 7-10, 1979, Burr Oak, Ohio

TR-2: 1. Arnie Koumlo

TR-3: 1. Jerry Zimmerman 2. Barb Richards 3. Tom Mahoney

TR-3A: 1. Jack Farrish 2. Steve Gorby 3. Tom Wiand

TR-3B: 1. Larry Frey 2. Jim Brown

Driven Daily: 1. Ed Miller 2. Ron Cherinsky 3. Ken Landry

BEST OF SHOW: Jerry Zimmerman (TR-3)

Throughout the weekend, all registered participants were eligible for door prizes that were given away during most major events. A special thanks is due Jaguar Rover Triumph Inc., who provided all of the handsome pewter trophies for the Concours.

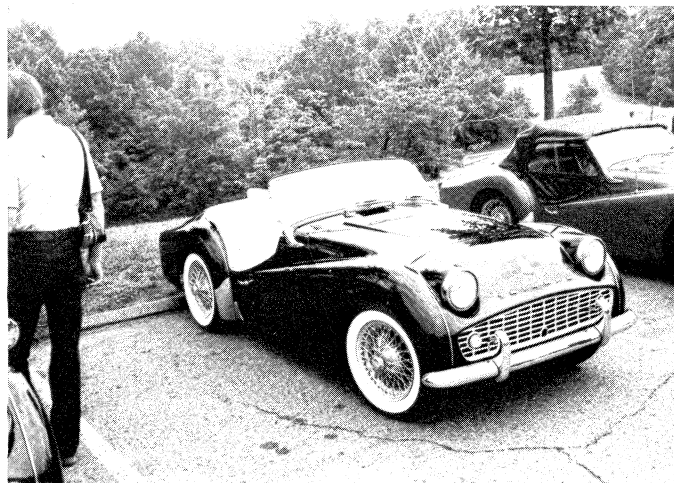
—Barb & Joe Richards



The fifty or so TRs of varies series were neatly lined up for the big meeting at Burr Oak State Lodge in Southeastern Ohio last summer. And the weather was kind most of the time.



TRA rallies are a gathering of friends united in a love of cars and of Triumphs in particular. Here, Barb Richards, hard working wife of the organizing club's president, conducts a Basic Troubleshooting Workshop for women rallyists.



Another gleaming beauty. Only hard work and elbow grease can keep them this way. This is Tom Wiand's beautiful TR-3A, for some reason only third in class.

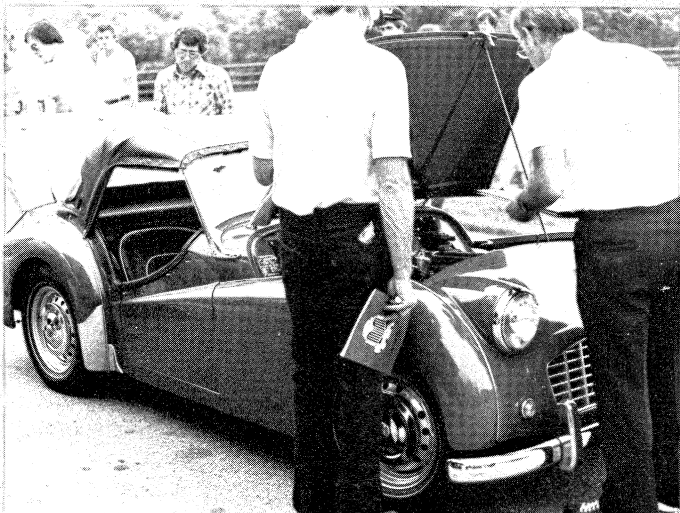
What is a Triumph Rally Really Like?



For the Friday early morning tour there was some rain but not enough to dampen the spirits of those TR drivers. After all they all had convertible tops, if not side curtains!



Early TR's of all types line up for their judging.



The moment of truth when the judges begin to inspect your car at the Concours. This one had no trouble. It is Jerry Zimmerman's 1956 TR-3, winner of that class and also judged Best of Show.

This excellent series of pictures tells you the story of what happens when some 50 owners of vintage Triumphs get together for a weekend of serious 'Auto' fun.

(Photos: Tom Mahoney of Galena, Ohio)



This is "Tom's TR" (but which Tom?) as the license plate says, with luggage locker complete with wrapped tools.



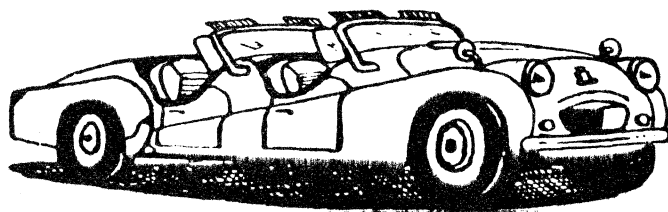
The Awards dinner on the Saturday evening when the well deserved prizes are handed out. Here TRA National President Joe Richards (left), presents Jerry Zimmerman with his Best of Show Award. See photo also of Jerry's TR-3.

The Sport



Triumph's World of Motor Sport

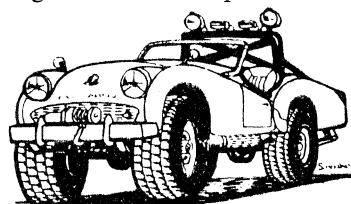
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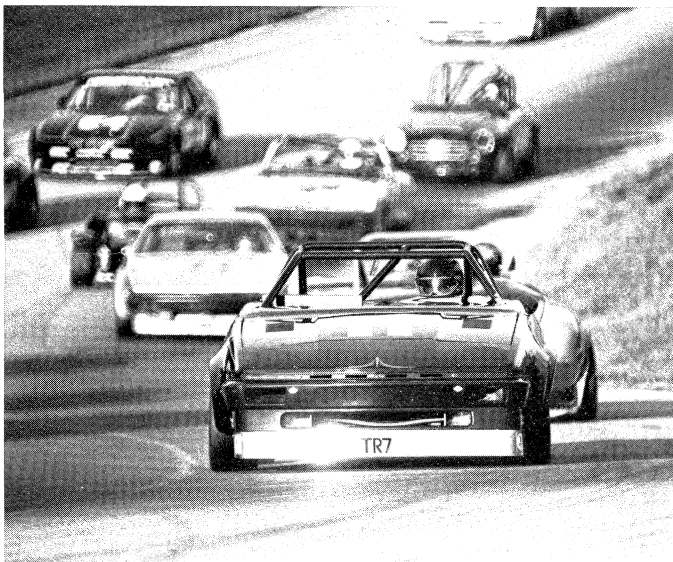
Former Road Racer Prominent in Pro-Rallies

Another TR8 driver whose presence is being felt in North American events is Jon Woodner of Washington, D.C. Brand new to high performance rallying this year. Jon scored two fifths and a third. He DNF'd the Criterium de Quebec but not until the last stage at which point he was the top American entry and was lying sixth overall.

Buffum says Woodner, a former road racer, has picked up stage rallying very quickly. "He goes quickly and is a consistent, knowledgeable driver. Experience is the thing now."



Drawings: Courtesy of Triumph Register of America and S. Hedke.



A great shot by our photographer Bill Oursler of Lee Mueller's new TR7 convertible leading the field (see front page).

The Big V8 Continues in IMSA Racing

On the Group 44 pro racing front, one event remains, the IMSA Winston 250 at Daytona International Speedway, Nov. 25. Bob Tullius and Brian Fuerstenau will handle the team's TR8. That car's 1979 record is really quite astounding. Five starts, four wins and a second, with two victories scored at Watkins Glen (Trans-Am), one at Road America (IMSA) and one at Laguna Seca (Trans-Am). The second place finish came in the Road Atlanta IMSA race in September.

Tullius' three Trans-Am wins gave him second place in driver's standings—and he wasn't even going for a championship.

Triumph Leading Rally Championship

On the rally side, our star driver John Buffum has put Triumph solidly in the lead for the North American Rally & Racing Association's MWAC manufacturers championship. JB himself has a virtual lock on the Sports Car Club of America Pro Rally driver's championship.

Shortly, JB will be in England competing in the world famous RAC Rally. He'll be at the wheel of a fuel injected TR8, with John Brown in the co-driver's seat. JB and Brown were together in the Welsh Rally earlier this year and last year's RAC. Buffum/Brown will join the official four-car BL Motorsport TR team in the RAC. The team has major sponsorship from British Airways this year.

West Coast Competition Manager

Steve Froines of Walnut Creek, Calif. has been named Competition Manager—West, of Jaguar Rover Triumph Inc.

Froines is headquartered at the firm's Northwest Zone office in Brisbane, Calif. For the past two years, he has been a district service manager for the Zone.

Since 1957, Froines has been an active sports car racing driver. In 1965, he won the SCCA D Production Championship driving a Triumph TR-4. He drove for the Triumph factory team in the 1966 Sebring race. Froines has served on the Board of Directors of the San Francisco region of SCCA and has been on its national competition board.

One of Froines' chief responsibilities will be the administration of the financial support program for MG, Jaguar and Triumph drivers running in national races west of the Mississippi.



TR7 Convertible Pace Car: At the North Atlantic Road Racing Championship run-offs (SCCA North East Division) at Lime Rock Park, Connecticut, circuit director Jim Haynes used a new Triumph Convertible as pace car.



22 Triumphs formed a long caravan one recent October Saturday, when they joined in a Fall Foliage Tour through Northern New Jersey. The cars ranged from Nick and Toni Cunningham's 1963 TR-4, to Dick McCusker's two-week old 1979 TR7 convertible.

Greater New York Area Club Activity

We learn of two enjoyable recent club events in the New Jersey and Pennsylvania areas. On Saturday October 13, a dozen or so Triumphs participated in the First Foreign Car Jamboree at Pocono Mountains, Pa., which attracted 60 cars altogether. Our photograph shows the Triumph class winners.

Then on Saturday October 20, there was a Fall Foliage Tour organized as a combined event by the new North New Jersey Club and by the well-known Long Island club. A total of 22 Triumphs turned out, starting from the State Line Overlook on the New Jersey Palisades Parkway and concluding at Vernon Valley Action Park. On the open road the Triumph caravan stretched half a mile or so. It was perfect top-down weather and the foliage was duly colorful to add to driving enjoyment.

Triumph owners in the greater New York area who are interested in joining a club (low-key rallies, socials, and

Concours, as well as more sporting autocross, etc., are offered) should contact:

Long Island Triumph Assoc.: John Rago, 27 Squirrel Lane, Levittown, N.Y. 11756 (516) 735-0343.

N. New Jersey Triumph Assoc.: Bill Sohl, 29 Netcong Rd., Budd Lake, N.J. 07828 (201) 691-8116 or Mike De Feo, 41 Jacksonville Dr., Parsippany, N.J. 07054 (201) 386-0862.

Delaware Valley Triumphs: Al Stryeski, 623 Franklin St., Lansdale, Pa. 19446 (215) 855-8233.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Stag Owners Urged to Join Vintage Triumph Register

About the letter from Carol Roch of Lexington, Kentucky (Triumph Newsletter July/Aug. '79), I recommend that Stag owners join the Vintage Triumph Register, as you mentioned. The first Stags are almost ten years old and will be "officially recognized" at that time. I think it is better



Triumph class winners at the October Jamboree in the Pocono Mountains: (L to R) Jack Stenn (TR-3) from Somerville, N.J.; Mike Polizzi (GT6) from Passaic, N.J.; Bill Manley (1973 Stag) from McLean, Va.; and Al Stryeski (TR-4) from Lansdale, Pa.

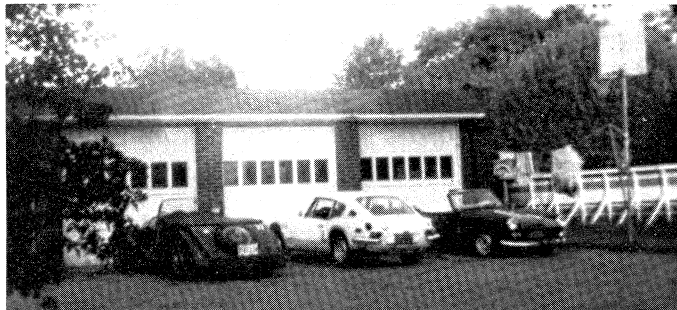
in the long run to see the growth of a single club—the VTR—devoted to all Triumphs rather than a proliferation of individual clubs for each type.

Any Triumph enthusiast can join VTR by sending \$10 (\$14 outside North America) with their name, address and information about their Triumph (type and serial number) to VTR—Membership, P.O. Box 36477, Grosse Pointe, Mich. 48236: Let me emphasize that membership does not require ownership of a Triumph.

—Bill Sohl, Budd Lake, N.J.

(In the last issue we gave the president of VTR's address but the above is evidently best for membership inquiries. The VTR policy states "All we require our members to have is an interest in the restoration and preservation of Triumphs ten years old and older." Membership fees include six issues of a magazine "The Vintage Triumph." If these are not published within twelve months, dues are considered paid until all six are received.

With regard to Stag parts, also queried by Carol Roch, there is still availability through the normal channel of ordering through Jaguar Rover Triumph dealers.—Ed.)



Long Time Triumph Enthusiast

Enclosed is a picture of my Spitfire and my GT6 and a friend's Morgan. I now have a '77 TR7 but don't have a picture of it. I enjoy my TR7 very much. I still own my GT6 but my '65 Spitfire is sold. I have owned and worked on Triumphs for a long time and enjoy receiving my Newsletter every two months. Keep up the good work.

—Bill Henderson, Bethel Park, Pa.

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS

(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. Commercial advertising from dealers, parts manufacturers, etc., is not accepted.—Editor)

FOR SALE

Hardtop (factory stock) for 1969-1976 TR6 (repainted). Also conv. top boot (brand new) with integral flap, designed to snap into hardtop, over folded soft top. \$375. for the set. Kent C. Martin, 551 Lakelawn Blvd., Aurora, Illinois 60506, (312) 896-9239.

1976 TR6 mint condition. No rips or rust. Original owner, 35,000 miles. Michelin tires, AM/FM stereo radio, tonneau cover. Yellow, black interior. Last of a lost breed, serious inquiries only—\$5,500. Jim Misek, 714 Holly Lane, Mt. Holly, N.J. 08060, (609) 267-1227.

10 assorted Triumph trophies. Details on request. Best offer. V. G. Barnes, 12411 Plumpoint Dr., Houston, TX 77099.

2 brand new 185 x 15 Red Band Michelin tires (were spares) \$95. 2 Lucas 15ACR Alternators: 1 like new \$40, the other \$10. TR6 Black Tonneau Cover \$35. TR-3 White Boot Cover \$5. 1 pair TR-3 Ammco Side Vent Windows \$20. 1 New TR6 Grill Emblem \$30.

1979 Triumph Spitfire: Excellent condition, factory maintained (has been photographed in TSOA Newsletters). White with red/silver/blue racing stripes, tan interior. Hardtop, luggage rack, AM/FM/8 track stereo are included. Asking \$5495. Call 201-461-7300 ext. 324 from 9-4, 201-967-9482 after 5. Diane Czaplinski.

Engine for TR-3B/TR-4. Freshly rebuilt by expert TR engine specialist. Price \$895 complete w/o manifolds, price reduced with exchange. Also, custom rebuilding service available. Call or write: Dan Hughey, 10950 Beechwood Dr., Indianapolis, IN 46280, (317) 844-9029.

Sales brochures and badgework for Triumph Sedans sold outside U.S.A., large quantities of fuel injection equipment for TR6's and 2.5 Sedans. Wanted to Sell or Swap: Terry O'Beirne, P.O. Box 158, Collinsville, Queensland, Australia 4804.

WANTED

Sales brochures and badgework for any model Triumphs sold in the U.S.A., workshop manual and parts book for 1800 or 2000 Roadsters, old club newsletters. Wanted to Buy: Terry O'Beirne, P.O. Box 158, Collinsville, Queensland, Australia 4804.

TR6 factory hardtop, white or black in color, write Wayne Fuller, Rt. 2, Box 386, Collinsville, Miss. 39325.

TR6 factory hardtop, white if possible, or any color. Call collect (814) 833-6790 after 6 p.m. or write Ron Ericsson, P.O. Box 8401, Erie, Pa. 16506.

Chassis frame for 1967 TR-4A. Will consider restoring one. Contact, Nancy J. Budd, 124 S. Park Ave., Hinsdale, Ill. 60521.

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
Competition Stickers, Mylar	2 for \$1.00
Competition Patches (Helmet)	(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 Jaguar Rover Triumph Inc.

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(Founded 1956)

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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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