



TSOA

TRIUMPH

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How To Watch A Race

By **BOB FENDELL**
Noted Auto Sports Columnist

Thanks to the efforts of some promoters and race chairmen in distributing special credentials to just about anyone whose name they can pronounce, race watching has become a wonderfully dangerous sport. It's like playing "chicken" in hot rods but you don't have to pay for the gas.

The new kind of race watching presents several problems, some indigenous to a particular road course, others more general. For instance you score most points at Sebring if you can wander around the Esses, eluding the police and race stewards. Esses, incidentally, are very big point-getters at most courses and, if one has to crawl through the woods to get there as at Bridgehampton, you have scored double. You're in without paying and you're in a restricted area.

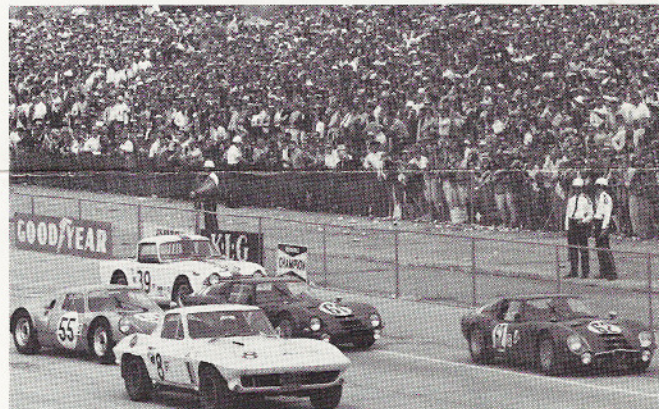
Of course you can be a cube and rate special credentials legitimately — like being a bona fide working newspaperman or a real live flagman or part of the working pit crew or even a photographer on paid assignment. This kind of ploy will get you everywhere but it scores absolutely no points even if you stand on top of the ambulance in the paddock.

Carrying an expensive looking camera helps earn credentials sometimes if you huff and puff at the press secretary. It is much easier to butter the promoter or know someone who can turn the screws on him — like the guy who bought that ad along pit row. We know one gent who got credentials carrying only the camera case — then his friend got in saying he had to bring him the camera. Unfortunately, a go-kart ran over his toe in the paddock and the camera case carrier spent the afternoon in the infirmary.

Being a girl — even in tight levis — hardly ever helps anymore, we noticed. We noticed the girl and so did the press chairman but, despite his admiration, he managed to drool a "no" to an extra pit crew credential.

Promoters May Give

Thus the promoter is the best source of special credentials. Each promoter is susceptible to a blandishment unique unto himself. Most ladle out credentials to local politicians, anyone likely to invest money in the way of advertising or to personal friends. Promoters work so hard they don't have many personal friends but they sometimes believe people they see around all the time are friends. So you can be around all the time. Get to know your promoter. Take him to lunch. Send him that



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striped tie you need to get rid of. Buy his crackerjacks.

But more points can be scored by just paying your way in, then sneaking into a restricted area. It is very difficult to police a 2- to 5-mile long road course so a pair of wire cutters works wonders. You get points for torn clothing and even more if you break a leg rolling down a rocky slope after you've lost your balance. A leg broken this way is a much better conversation piece than one fractured skiing.

Promoters and race stewards never have enough personnel to chase everyone so, sooner or later, you can get right next to the course where the cars speed by. It's part of a long tradition. In pre-Castro Cuba the fans leaned out over the race course from their houses to try to touch the cars speeding by. People used to stand 10 deep on the most dangerous curves in the old Mille Miglia.

When a car spins out and demolishes a few fans, their families have the pleasant knowledge the demolished ones have scored the most points possible in race watching. The knowledge sort of makes the wake. It could make yours, too . . . and maybe racing's.

Yes, there really are people who couldn't care less if auto racing were wiped from the face of the earth. Of course, we know this would be a shame because where else can one drink beer with such an exciting background scene? You don't have to know the classes of SCCA racing but you better know your brews. You have to, for if someone's shiney-faced kid brother asks for a can, you gotta figure how much will get him happy-drunk. (People also say regional races look better through the foam.)

Sport Proves Skill

If a baseball fan — some racing people also like baseball but this is hard to believe — asks what good is racing,

(Continued on page 4)

Retiree Picks Racing as Hobby, Praises Required Safety Gear

By LORA SHANER

(Reprinted with permission of the Fort Bliss News)

Robert C. Mitchell, Ft. Bliss Training Aids Officer, has found his fountain of youth. While most men who have reached the half-century mark in their lives are content to follow a golf ball around the greens or cast a fishing line, Mr. Mitchell, of 10005 Singapore, can be found most Sunday afternoons racing around an obstacle course in a sleek, highly-tuned Triumph TR-4 sports car.

Last year alone, Mitchell entered 45 driving events, winning five first place standings, seven second and four thirds.

The layout of obstacles and the length of the course vary with gymkhana events, however Mitchell maneuvered around a particularly short and tight course in Las Cruces last month in 57 seconds, averaging 110 mph, to take first prize among a field of 80 entrants. His top speed, clocked on a straightaway, is 131 mph, although Mitchell is quick to emphasize that the joy of sports car driving is "not speed, but maneuverability."

Since Mitchell acquired his first sports car six years ago, he has participated in numerous gymkhanas, rallies and hare and hound events.

A rally is a cross-country run in which check points are established every few miles and a specific time, down to tenths of seconds, set for completion of each segment of the run between check points. Drivers must meet this time to the split second. They are penalized as much for undercutting the established time as for exceeding it.

The hare and hound events are motorized versions of follow-the-leader. A lead car, starting in advance of the "hounds" throws out bags of lime on a zig-zag course through town and suburbs. The "hounds" must follow these clues and end up in the same place as the "hare," but this is more difficult than it appears.

A driver who finds a bag of lime at a five street intersection, for example, must trust to instinct to know where to turn. If he doesn't find another clue before too long, he knows he's made a mistake and must turn back.

Participating in events of this sort calls for the ultimate in safety precautions. Mitchell's TR-4 is equipped with a shoulder harness as well as the standard seat belt, special racing tires and a roll bar which arches over his head and can be safely subjected to 60,000 pounds of stress. He states, gratefully, "I've never had to use it, but I'm sure glad it's there." In addition, sports cars entering driving events must undergo a rigorous safety inspection each time, even if they enter several times a week.

Mitchell, a retired Army lieutenant colonel, became interested in automobiles in the early 1930s when he raced stock cars in Sebring, Fla. Although his interest didn't wane, his opportunity to pursue his hobby decreased when he entered the service in 1932. It was renewed after retirement in 1961 when he joined his first sports car club, having owned a Triumph, TR-3, for a year, and began participating in driving events.

His current car, on which he performs most of the maintenance himself, is equipped with a high lift cam shaft, no-slip differential, a ported and polished engine (exhaust and intake perfectly synchronized), a tuned exhaust system, racing suspension and special racing clutch.

Mitchell is a member of the local Sunland Sports Car Club and Triumph Owners Club of El Paso. He also holds honorary membership in many foreign sports car clubs.



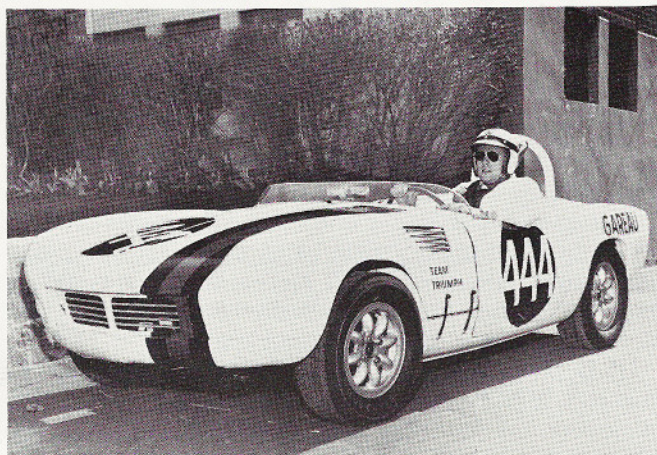
ROBERT C. MITCHELL

El Paso Club Lists Officers

An active TSOA Club is the Triumph Owners Club of El Paso, TOCEP, 8949 Dyer Street, El Paso, Texas 79904. The officers are:

President L. K. "Red" Sanders
Vice President Robert C. Mitchell
Secretary Susan Hopkins
Treasurer Hildegard Jones
Directors: Vic Thunberg, Woody Pinkman,
Harry Delgidallo
Past President: Harry Cecil

Races and Rallies....

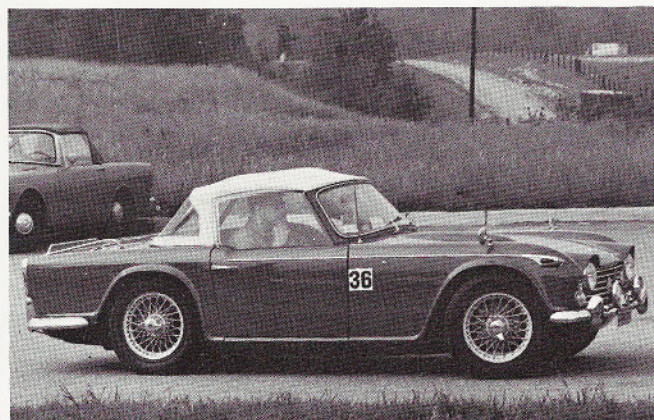


Triumph seems to have cornered the "4" market. Shown is Triumph Spitfire "444", the Canadian Team entry being driven this season by André Gibeault and John Spenser-Nairn. There is a Triumph "44" in British Columbia and a "444" in Eastern Canada. South of the boarder in the U.S. we have "Messrs. 44" Tullius and Gilmartin of "The Group" and the Singular Charlie Gates Spitfire, number "4", on the West Coast. For bigger and better wins look to the fourward guys of Triumph — for more fourtrighth racing.



SPLIT SECOND

One of a team of three "2000's" at a check-point in the Virginia Reel Rally — a 500 mile, two-day trek from Fredericksburg west to the great Smokies. The trio will be running in all the major SCCA rallies in the East this summer.



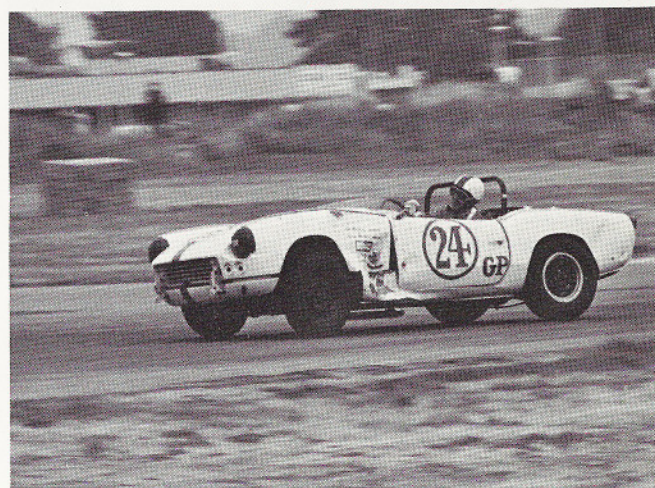
TR-4A DUO

Steve Morrisett, and Bill Leffin, both of Charlotte, N. C., got under way in their TR-4A in the Virginia Reel Rally. Seventy-two cars were entered in the rally. The Triumph team chalked up four points in the event.



LET'S GO RACING GANG

Dick Gilmartin of Falls Church did just that and set a new track record in class at Vineland, N. J. on June 5th. Dick ran his "44" numbered Spitfire and himself in true champ fashion in this GP event. Dick did the same at "The Bridge" on June 18th.



ED BARKER

Vince Romito of N. Hollywood sent us this great shot of Ed Barker running at Santa Barbara. In spite of what seems to have been trouble with the garage door, Ed came in second on the Saturday and first on Sunday.



Gene and Katu Hondorf of Rochester, N. Y. lined up for the start of the Virginia Reel National Rally. They have been First Triumph in this rally, the Great Petroleum and The Historic New York Rallies. Behind them are Phil Henderson and Lee Hendricks of Williamsville, New York.

OVER WHAT?

A friend of ours ordered a new Spitfire the other day. Going over the list of options, we came to over-drive. Our friend stopped short. "What's that?" he asked.

We're aware that most sports-car owners are thoroughly familiar with what an over-drive does, how it works and when to use it. But we discovered that quite a few of the uninitiated haven't the faintest idea what the unit is all about. Many owners have gotten so used to its dependability they just take it for granted. So we asked a couple of Triumph's technical men to give us a capsule explanation in layman's language.

Basically, Triumph's Laycock-De-Normanville over-drive is a means of reducing an engine's revolutions per minute while maintaining a desired forward speed. In O-D, the revolutions per minute are reduced 25% in the Spitfire and about 22% in the TR's.

The first thing to notice is quieter engine operation. This is due to the lower RPMs, which in turn increases engine life. Lower maintenance cost is an added bonus, along with an increase of about 12% in gas mileage.

You can think of over-drive as giving you seven speeds forward. In effect 2+, 3+, and 4+ gears on the TRs. You can use it extensively in traffic, often accomplishing the desired speed by simply going in and out of over-drive without touching "gear changes" lever. On the Spitfire and Triumph "2000" Sedan, O-D works in 3rd and top gears only.

It is not necessary to disengage the clutch when going in or out of over-drive. And, of course, it can't work in first gear or reverse, and second gear on Spitfires and 2000's.

If you have a friend who's thinking of buying a Triumph, suggest that he order over-drive installed at the factory. It's quite a job to have it done later, and costs almost twice as much. Over-drive is a big plus when you trade in your Triumph for a new one.

WANT ADS:

FOR SALE: 1 Tonneau, White, Full \$20.
1 Soft Top, White, TR-4 \$20.
Richard C. Trump, M.D.
415 150th Ave.
Madeira Beach, Fla.

FOR SALE: TR-4 ('64-65) Hard Top \$145.
Martin Shindler
8848 20th Ave.
Bklyn, N. Y. Tel: 212-372-5104

FOR SALE: Tonneau, TR-4A, White \$15.
AMCO TR-4A Chrome Luggage Rack
No drilling necessary like new \$25.
John P. Greenwalt
42 Green Brook Rd.
Green Brook, N. J. Tel: 201-968-4457

FOR SALE: 1966 TR-4A (IRS).
Excellent Condition.
Wire Wheels, and all other extras.
Reason for Sale: Going Abroad.
James Lacirignola
8805-30th Avenue
Jackson Heights, N. Y. Tel: 212 - IL 7-0324

HOW TO WATCH A RACE

(Continued from page 1)

please don't repeat the drivel that great automotive advances have come out of competition. Ask him what good is baseball?

A sport doesn't have to prove anything except that it takes skill to perform well and possibly that it is exciting or fun. The latter two are not necessarily the same: the new kind of race watching can be exciting to the sneaks in the restricted area but it is not fun to the poor marshal who has to make like Roger Bannister to chase them out.

We think another point system is in order . . . a system to point the way out of racing for fans, promoters and race officials who either don't care about making this as safe a sport as possible or won't spend the money or effort to do so. Credentials should be harder to get than a diamond tiara. Any track with a place where a car could get into the paying customers should be fixed up or shut down. No matter how important the races it harbors.

It is the job of a major sanctioning organization to make racing safe with **no** exceptions. If this means banning beer and hard liquor from a track, well, that's the way the can crunches. We were not at this year's Sebring where, from press reports, the alcoholic problem was acute. We have been at races where kids were so stewed that on a dare they would have tried the Hertz act into a speeding car which already had a driver.

There are drunks at oval track racing, too, but they can't get to the track. On some road circuits they can. Then the whole magnificent U. S. safety record of sports-car racing in the past decade goes up the escape road. And so does the fun of a guy who worked his fingers to the knuckles to get his TR-3 competition ready.

A promoter should have one special credential, his own. The sanctioning body should supervise handing out the rest and insist upon adequate policing of restricted areas. A high official of a major sanctioning organization figuratively threw up his hands at the idea of controlling the issuing of marshals' passes to the friends of the promoter. This is the defeatism that will wreck auto racing—or at the very least keep it the pariah of many sports pages. And, you know what? It will deserve its fate.

TSOA SUPERMARKET

TRIUMPH JACKETS

Custom-tailored shower-proof wash-and-wear blue poplin zipper jackets with silk-screened Triumph logo on back; exclusive to TSOA: specify size —s, m, l, xl \$9.50

TSOA T-SHIRTS

Attractive white knit shirt with collar and button front. No pocket. Triumph logo in blue on back, shield on left front. Specify s, m, l, xl \$4.50

TSOA Handbook \$1.00

"Please Don't Dent Me" Cards \$1.00/100

Local TSOA Club "Calling Cards" FREE

List of Triumph Dealers and Distributors FREE

STAA Badge \$1.50

Replacement TSOA Badge \$1.00

Standard Triumph Review Subscription \$2.50/year

TR-4, TR-4A Competition Preparation Booklet \$2.00

SPITFIRE Competition Preparation Booklet \$2.00

Send Check or Money Order. No C.O.D.'s please.

The TSOA NEWSLETTER is published monthly by the Triumph Sports Owners Association, Box 3273, Grand Central Station, New York, N. Y. 10017. TSOA is a national organization of American sports car enthusiasts who own a Triumph or are interested in the purposes of the Association. Subscription is included with a \$5.00 lifetime membership in the club.