



# TRIUMPH TSOA NEWSLETTER

TRIUMPH SPORTS OWNERS ASSOCIATION

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## INTERNATIONAL REGISTRATION LETTERS

By Jack Griffiee

Motor Sports Columnist — New Jersey Dailies

Foreign cars, large or small, economy or sports, are not now strangers on the U. S. roads. With foreign auto sales approximately five per cent of the total market, everywhere you drive you see Spitfires, TR-3's, TR-4's, 2000 sedans, and even, once in a while, a few of those beetles — brand X.

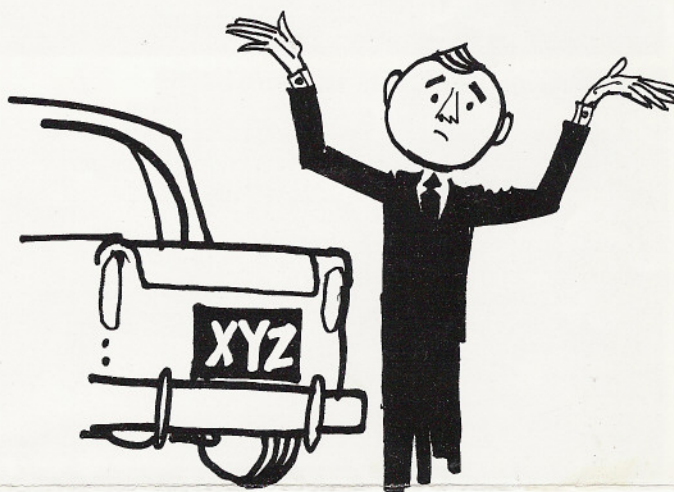
If you have looked closely at the front or rear bumpers of some of these cars you might have noticed small plaques with the letters GB, D, F, or USA. These letters are International Registration Letters which show the country in which the car was originally registered. The above letters are easy. GB is for Great Britain and Northern Ireland, D is for Germany (Deutschland), F is for France, and USA is, of course, United States of America.

A few of the letters you may not be so familiar with are as follows: ADN is Aden (do you even know where it is?); BG is Bulgaria; CH is not China but Switzerland; EAT represents of all places, Tanganyika; Zanzibar is shown by the letters EAZ; and YY is for Venezuela.

A few areas closely bound to Great Britain such as Gibraltar and the island possessions of Alderney, Guernsey, Jersey, Isle of Man and Malta are identified by the letters GBZ, GBA, GBG, GBJ, and GBM. For good measure, HK is for Hong Kong.

Unless you are on the ball the countries of Argentina, China, Chile, Haiti, Indonesia, Lebanon and San Marino might fool you because the letter R for Republic is in front. The registration letters for the above countries are as follows: RA, RC, RCH, RH, RI, RL, and RSM. The letters RNY do not stand for Republican from New York but for the country of Nyasaland.

The letters from a few of our friendly neighbors are as follows: CDN is for Canada; MEX is Mexico; JA is for



Jamaica; IS is Iceland; sunny Barbados has the letters BDS; and DOM is for Dominican Republic. PA is for Panama, not the Port Authority.

If you see a car with the letters SU, it does not necessarily mean it is a British car with a well-known type of carburetor but the car was registered in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

After teasing you with a few difficult letters here is a basic lesson in your A, B, C's: A is Austria, B is Belgium, and C is for Cuba. CO does not mean a car owned by the commanding officer — the car was registered in Columbia. Soldiers returning from our current war zone will certainly recognize the letters VN — for Viet-Nam.

The most prized letter plate for Triumph owners would be, naturally, TR, but you would have to go to Turkey to get it.

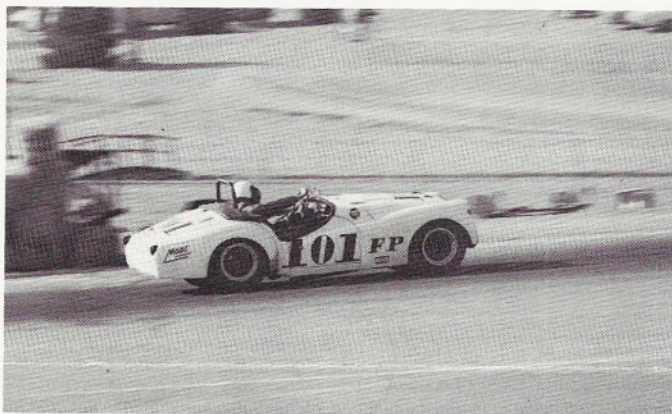




"F" production start - - - - the sweet smell of Castrol.



Dick Gilmartin leaning into turn 8.



Bob Krokus going well.



Mike, Bob, Tony, and Roy - - - - 4 from the Group 44.

# AMERICAN ROAD RACE

By Mik

The ARRC has achieved the status which the SCCA hoped it would. It has become the sports car race of the year . . . the one which is the goal of all competitive drivers around the country.

This year, the ARRC returned to Riverside, host course for the original event in 1964. But the freezing winds of '64 were absent and drivers and spectators enjoyed temperatures in the 65-72 range, perfect racing weather.

Almost every qualifying driver paid his entry fee and travelled to Riverside. In 1964 about 225 entries came in. This year over 300 entered and the races were that much more exciting. Technical inspection was slowed by the large number of cars but, eventually, 10 Spitfires, nine TR-4's and nine TR-3's made their respective grids.

Qualifying times were posted on Friday and the three Triumph events, G, F, and D Production, were among the most carefully watched. Lap times in GP came down to 1:48, two seconds faster than the official lap record (held by Ed Barker, Spitfire).

The unbelievably fast MG Midget of Carson Baird from Maryland qualified in the pole position, followed closely by Ed Barker, Southern Pacific champ, in a Spitfire and Bob Sharp from Connecticut in his Datsun. Other leading Spitfire qualifiers were Jack Scoville and Rick Hilgers from the Northern Pacific and Dick Gilmartin from the Northeast.

RACE TIME: 1 pm, Saturday, November 26.

A fair-sized crowd was on hand for the GP event, their appetites whetted by the preceding Formula V and H Production events. As the flag dropped, Baird and Barker roared away together with Sharp, Scoville, Gilmartin and Hilgers right behind. For the first few laps the traffic was heavy but gradually, the field spread out. Sharp dropped back, his car not running well, while Scoville and Barker pursued Baird in the flying Midget.

Early in the race the Spitfire of Bob Eschauzier, San Antonio, Texas, broke a stub axle right at the start/finish line. His car swerved slightly, hitting Mel Bogus' car in the left front as Mel was about to pass. The impact threw Bogus' car into the wall and resulted in a spectacular flip in which Bogus was not hurt. His car landed on its wheels at the end of the pit wall.

A few laps later Jack Scoville blew his engine and retired, leaving Ed Barker and Rick Hilgers to lead the Spitfire challenge. Barker was right behind Baird's Midget and moving up. Suddenly, as Barker passed the start/finish, he was given the black flag. The grille had fallen out of his car and, under SCCA rules, he had to be called in. Unable to replace the grille, Ed had to pull into the pits.

Hilgers, of Carmel, California, driving beautifully, continued to close on Baird but could not catch him before the end of the race. Final order was Baird, Hilgers, Gilmartin. Before being flagged Ed Barker had set a new Riverside GP record of 1:49 flat.



# OF CHAMPIONS—1966

Cook

While the GP leaders battled, the race of the day was going on between Dick Gilmartin and Jim Fitzgerald, Lompoc, California, Morgan driver. Fitzgerald closed in early in the race, attempting to pass but not quite able to make it. The two cars went lap after lap, Gilmartin leading and Fitzgerald only inches behind. In a real display of heads-up driving Fitzgerald "drafted" Gilmartin's car down the straight so close that the two cars appeared tied together. Under tremendous pressure Gilmartin drove perfectly, never allowing the Morgan to get into a position to pass and finally "shutting the gate" on the corners. This duel between Dick and Bill is the sort of thing that makes SCCA racing what it is . . . racing for fun with as much pleasure to be derived from close competition as from winning first place.

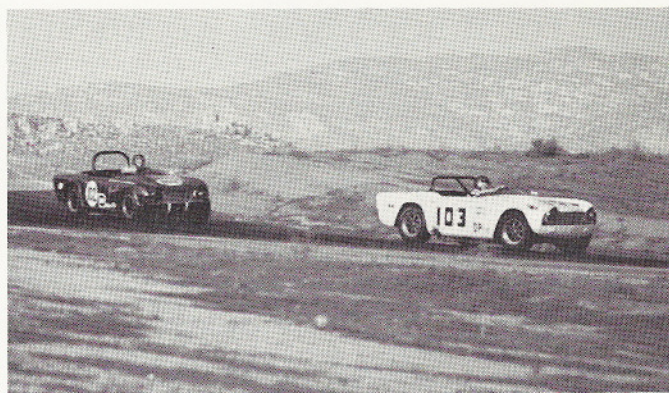
F Production, final race on Saturday, drew the crowd's attention to a closely-matched field. Leading the qualifiers were Bob Sharp in a 1600cc Datsun, Dick Hull from Lansing, Michigan in a Volvo P-1800 and Tom Carter of Salt Lake City in a TR-3, Northeast Champ Bob Krokus, in his TR-3, had been having tuning problems but made the grid after long hours in the pits.

At the start, Sharp ran off and hid, pulling out to a 20-second lead within 10 laps. Following closely was Hull and, back in the pack, Carter was moving up. At the Esses, it was obvious Sharp could not be caught. His technique was perfect. However, after leading for 25 minutes, he pulled off before Turn 6 with a blown engine. Hull continued on to win with Carter charging hard. At the same pace, given one or two more laps, Carter could have won but as he said after the race "I didn't go after him soon enough!" Finishing a solid third in the noisiest TR in the race was Mike Hiss from Baltimore. Fourth finisher in the Northeast, Hiss was able to run at River-side when #3, Art Riley, opted for Speed Week at Nassau.

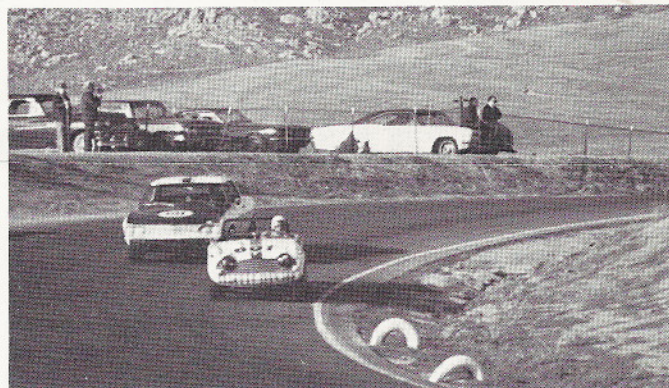
Of all the Production class races, D is perhaps the most popular, pitting the TR-4's and 4A's against their traditional rivals, the MGB's. This year, two new factors made the race even more exciting. Two Yenko Stingers, one the D Champ from the Northeast, driven by Dr. Dick Thompson, the other Jerry Thompson's Central Division winner, were entered. But the hottest qualifier was undoubtedly Jerry Titus, "Sports Car Graphic" editor, in a Porsche 911. He was a full second faster than the top TR's, Jim Dittmore and Bob Tullius.

The calibre of D competition was evident in the qualifying times. The first six D cars qualified faster than the fastest CP car in the combined race. The start was a divided one with the C cars going off 30 seconds ahead of D. Titus led from the flag with Dittmore, driving the race of his life, right behind and closing the gap. Although the 911 was faster on the straight, Dittmore was catching up in the tight turns, a tribute to the handling of his Kastner-prepared car.

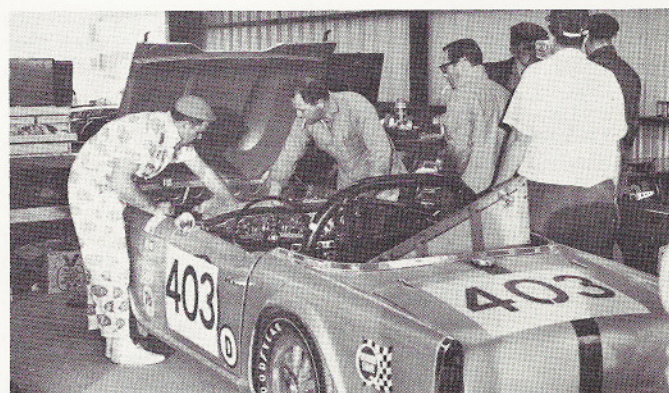
(Continued on page 4)



Buzz Marcus passing Bob Tullius.



Dr. Thompson catching Bill Pendleton.



Vic Campbell and Bert Jones making last minute "adjustments."



Joe Valdes tops a bevy of rail birds.



## HOW TO REDUCE ROAD ACCIDENTS

If all those wild and dangerous drivers we see on our highways were eliminated, it would make only a very small reduction in the total number of accidents!

It is you, we, and all the other average drivers who cause most of the trouble. T. S. Skillman, in his excellent new book, "Road Safety," shows us why and then proceeds in clear and precise style to tell us exactly what we can do about it.

Millions of words have been written recently on the subject of highway safety. Most of them take the view that automobiles are unsafe. Skillman, on the basis of his exhaustive research around the world, prefers the other side — safety is in the driver's hands. He estimates mechanical failures are involved in 10 per cent to 25 per cent of all accidents.

There are two major reasons why the average driver runs into trouble. First, he isn't nearly as good a driver as he believes himself to be and, secondly, he places himself in a vulnerable situation — one in which he takes a chance or becomes susceptible to an accident — five to ten times each driving day.

Some of the main causes of vulnerability are: inattention, distraction, carelessness, tiredness, anger, drunkenness and over-confidence.

To improve everyone's basic driving ability, the author admits, would mean a long, long road to any substantial progress, human nature takes care of that. But Skillman analyzes fully his concept of vulnerability and explains in detail how we may drastically reduce our vulnerability rate.

Skillman contends, all drivers at times make themselves momentarily vulnerable to an accident. Usually the vulnerability or hazard lasts only a second or two. But if your vulnerability happens to coincide in time and space with that of another driver, then a collision will be imminent.

"Such a juxtaposition happens to the average driver about once a year. This means that he makes about 3,000 to 4,000 misjudgments before one catches up with him (based on five to ten per day)."

Skillman then points out that once the juxtaposition of two vulnerabilities (a confrontation) has happened, it is no longer completely within the power of either driver to escape a collision.

"Each is dependent on the skill and cooperation of the other. Nineteen out of twenty such juxtapositions are successfully handled on the average by the two drivers. The twentieth produces a crash."

What can help us to lower our vulnerability rate?

We have to change our minds, the author says. We have to get rid of apathy, complacency, the "it won't happen to me" attitude. We can only do this by thinking about the question.

As a starter, Skillman suggests we monitor our vulnerabilities. And he suggests several counting devices.

He shows us how to take our daily vulnerability score for a period of three weeks. The first week's score gives us a base line. The second week becomes a super-safe one in which we set out to cut the score to an absolute minimum, accepting any delay for the sake of safety. At the end of the second week we review the sacrifices made, and decide which of them are acceptable and which are not. We drive for the third week on this basis. If our third-week score is better than our first, we have substantially reduced our chances of a crash.

Most of us, Skillman observes, drive for 20 or 30 years before we approach the statistical time when a crash is due. By use of the methods so ably presented in this perceptive book, it is conceivable that this figure could be improved to one crash per 100 or 150 years of driving! But such progress would require the cooperation of many millions of drivers.

"Road Safety" is a thoroughly competent research job. It covers many aspects of the subject — youth, age, road conditions, law enforcement, driver education, first aid, licensing, alcohol. It is fully documented with an extensive appendix and the bibliography is a tribute to Skillman's tireless devotion to his task.

The book is a highly practical, easy-to-read, persuasive document. It makes you think. We can't hope that this well-written work will be in every home in the United States. But somebody should pass a law to make "Road Safety" required reading for every individual before his next license-renewal time.

## ARRC—'66 (Continued)

Dittemore's chance was lost early in the race when, following the crash of Ron McConkey's Jaguar, the yellow flag was out for five laps. Titus, in the lead, picked up about 10 seconds under the yellow, making his lead impossibly long. The over-all finish in D was Titus, Dittemore, Pendleton. Bill Pendleton, of Eugene, Oregon, is a top TR driver and Sebring team veteran, first this year in the Northern Pacific Division.

Titus passed all the C cars to win overall. Dittemore finished right behind the C leader for third overall. ARRC 1965 Champ, Steve Froines, and Bob Tullius, "Mr. Triumph" from the Northeast, finished fourth and sixth with Jerry Thompson's Stinger in fifth. The leading Northeast TR driver, Buzz Marcus was well up early in the race but suffered mechanical problems. Dick Thompson's Stinger DNF'd.

There has never been better sports car competition than was seen at the ARRC. Three accidents occurred but the drivers involved were not seriously injured. In the A and B Production race, the red flag went up, stopping the race, following a pile-up on the pit straight involving Dan Gerber's Mustang and another car. An astonishing duel took place in A-B sedan between Horst Kwech in an Alfa and Allan Moffat in a Cortina. For the entire race these cars were never more than 20 feet apart and were usually nose to tail. Kwech won it and received the SCCA's award for top driving.

Triumph finished two cars in the money in each event, a very respectable record. In 1967, with the TR-3 moved up to EP and the MGB and Porsche 911 absent from DP, the competition should be even hotter! TSOA wants to congratulate the SCCA and Riverside for a great weekend of racing!

## 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

JACKET EMBLEM ..... \$1.00

(Club Discount — 1 Doz.) ..... \$10.00

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

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