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VINTAGE SPORTS CAR DRIVERS ASSOCIATION



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Contest
Winners

Road Racing Legend
John Morton Returns

The Cars of

Bahama's Speed Week!

Mike Korneli Reports

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The Vintage Racer

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Winter Issue 2014

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Sept 11-14, 2014 Road America Elkhart Lake, WI

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V S C D A The MAGAZINE

Winter 2014

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Editor
Chris Bonk

The Annual VSCDA Photo Contest

2nd Runner Up - Dave Brown - 1935 Morgan F2 Trike. Taken at Watkins Glen.



1st Runner Up - Mike Pixley - His 69 Lotus Elan



Contest Winner - Steve Bonk - Road America

A photograph of a white Datsun race car, number 22, at Road America. The car is seen through a chain-link fence. A person is standing in the foreground, looking at the car. The image is overlaid with text: 'Feel the "Vintage Spirit" with the VSCDA 2014'.

**GingerMan Spring Brake
Driver's School & Races**
GingerMan Raceway, South Haven, MI
May 2-4, 2014

Elkhart Lake Vintage Festival XXIX®
Mama Mia - That's Italian!
Celebrating Italian Marque Cars
Road America, Elkhart Lake, WI
September 11-14, 2014

Blackhawk Vintage Classic XXII
Blackhawk Farms, Beloit, IL
June 13-15, 2014

Vintage Grand Prix Au Grattan XXVIII
Grattan Raceway Park, Grattan, MI
August 15-17, 2014



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The Annual VSCDA Photo Contest continued



John Tulloch



Stan Mason



Avery Reed



David Michelle



Dennis DeLap



Don Kelly



Gary Knopf



Jeff Fisher



Jeffery Edington



Jessica Johnk



Ken Stidwell



Liz Rorke



Rick Blaha



Sally Wallin

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GingerMan Spring Brake Driver's School & Races

May 2-4, 2014
GingerMan Raceway
South Haven, MI



DDV Series Race
Trans Am B-Sedan Series Race
Spridget Series Race



Project 46: Bring John Morton Back to the Runoffs

By John Morton



Many of America's most successful road racers developed their skills in amateur races conducted under the auspices of the Sports Car Club of America (the SCCA). Drivers such as Dan Gurney, Phil Hill, and Carroll Shelby, along with many more, began their racing careers as amateurs.

In 1964, the SCCA streamlined their procedure for crowning National Champions in the various classes of racecars that they recognized. Prior to 1964, for a team

to contest a National Championship, it would have to travel the country for months, accumulating points in its class—a very expensive task that eliminated all but the well heeled.

This new system, allowing drivers to first win a divisional championship, culminated in what was called the American Road Race of Champions. This single race at the end of the season brought together divisional champions (and near-champions, as second and

third were also invited) from all over the country for a one-race shootout. These races are now officially known as the SCCA Runoffs.

At Elkhart Lake's Road America in Wisconsin last week, the SCCA celebrated the 50th anniversary of the Runoffs. They decided to allow anyone who had won a championship within the last 49 years to compete in the 50th, opening the door for an influx of old men who never quite "got over it," myself,



Mike Rand, and Jim Downing—the developer of the HANS device—included.

Instigated by a Chicagoan named Steve Bonk and his brother Chris, a large number of diehard fans and enthusiasts contributed to a "Bring John Morton Back to the Runoffs" project. Their goal: to build a replica of the BRE Datsun 240Z that, in 1970 and '71, I drove to National Championships. Sam Neave of LNA Racing in North Carolina agreed to build the car from a derelict street 240Z that languished in his yard (he paid \$2.40 for it). The body and paintwork were finished in Chicago by Marcin Wojtas of A&M Auto Body. Crew chief and main mechanic was Bart Tchorzewski. I first saw the car a week before the runoffs and was amazed at the quality of the work done in such a short time frame. It was a beautiful presentation.

Unfortunately, as frequently happens at Road America, the majority of the pre-race track time was rained out, depriving us of

the opportunity for fine-tuning the new car as well as its vintage driver. We finished 10th in a field of 38 entrants after starting 14th, a disappointment but an honor just the same to have competed in this historic event, way past my first social security check. I hope to get another shot at it next year

when the Runoffs move to Laguna Seca—that is, if I still haven't "gotten over it."

Incidentally, Greg Ira of Jacksonville, FL, won the race in his beautifully prepared Datsun 260Z, beating out a herd of Mazdas.



Photos clockwise starting opposite page: John during practice at Road America in the BBR 240Z, the original body bought for \$2.40, John and the BRE team circa 1970, Project 46 crew at the SCCA Runoffs Oct, 2013.



Bahama

MAHAMA SPEED WEEK

START/FINISH



Long time VSCDA member Mike Korneli crosses the Finish Line in his 1949 Jaguar XK.

It's funny how most car events or racing events for sure end up the same. Our trip to Nassau for the 2013 Bahamas Speed Week was not any different. After all I had 12 months to get ready and December 3rd was a long way off. The plan was to take our 1949 Alloy XK120 Jag to the Speed Week Revival. So after its winter storage it was time to make sure the car was ready to go. When I found the car in Argentina the restoration had been started. When I got it home I went through most of the stuff that had already been done, but not everything. That would be my excuse for why the problems developed. I went out to the garage to get the car ready for a spring drive. To start with, there is a new puddle under the car. Now, for anyone that owns a British car this is not at all that surprising. The standard line is; if it's not leaking, it's out of oil. It turned out to be the master cylinder that had been redone in Argentina. Then there was the weeping at the passenger rear wheel. It turned out to be the inner axle seal that was not replaced when they replaced the outer seal. No big deal. I get it all done, but wait; there's a new puddle under the car. It's coolant. Of course it couldn't be a hose clamp, it's the water pump. That leads to some corrosion in the mating casting that needs to be repaired. It's all done and I'm all ready to go. Unlike those reality TV shows, it is now well into summer. The test drive goes well, the car is running cool and it stops great. Well, as great as old drum brakes can stop you anyway. Things were going well until I took a drive that lasted for half an hour. That's when the car shut off. Welcome Lucas, the Prince of Darkness. To shorten the story by a few pages, I talked to everyone who's ever worked on a British car. We shared many horror stories trying to solve the problem. It turned out to be a combination of three problems. That only took a few months and it's fixed, I think. It's now one week before the transport truck will be here to pick up the car. The temperature has dropped to single digits. I would like to test drive the car one final time. With only Brookland windscreens on the car I would need to wear a snowmobile suit so I decide against it. So with all the confidence that anyone can have after spending months finding a moving target Lucas electrical problem, the car ships.

We arrived in the Bahamas a few days early and the car arrived a day later; everything and everyone got there safe and sound. The event actually started with historic go cart races on Sunday. A large group of carts were shipped from the UK. The first world carting championship took place in Nassau in 1959. How serious was it? Sterling Moss was there. Certainly some of that seriousness was present when the historic carts hit the temporary track. It was fun watching the races and visiting with the drivers. I certainly learned a lot about the progression of carting technology. The organizers had started a program for young people called Edukarting two years previous. Growing up in the Bahamas isn't always easy and the program helps to teach students responsibility, focus and commitment. The students who are involved have seen their grades rise dramatically.

After a couple of days to relax and enjoy the sun and the beach it was registration day. We had an opportunity to meet with our fellow competitors. The event was a combination of social events with the last two days being the hill climb and the street course races. We ended up making friends with two couples from Belgium who were driving Ferraris.

Bahama MAMA

BAHAMA SPEED WEEK

The first day started with getting the car cleaned up and checked out. We had to apply the sponsor decals to keep everyone happy. Late morning was the opening ceremony and in the afternoon we got our first chance to drive the track. Actually we only got to drive part of it. The course was set up on streets that were in daily use and they didn't have everything closed off. Later in the evening was dinner at the Governor's mansion. We were invited along with three other couples to put our cars on display. This was accomplished with a police motorcycle escort, complete with lights and sirens. I was amazed at the respect the police got from the regular traffic.

Cars were pulling up and over the curbs. It was like the parting of the Red Sea. We blasted down the center of the narrow crowded streets at speeds that made me uncomfortable and we never had to slow down once. We arrived at the Governor's mansion to enjoy the evening. The grounds were beautiful, the music was lovely, the food was great and the return trip was just as exciting.

The following day was Thursday and the 007 island tour. It was called the 007 island tour because it ended up at Lyford Cay which is where Sean Connery lives. The tour was a much longer daytime version of the night before. The tour started with about



Concourse of cars at Sean Connery's estate in Lyford Cay.



The concourse winner at 007's estate.

ten motorcycle police in the lead. As we got to an intersection or roundabout the police would block traffic and we would blast through. I don't know what the speed limits were, but we weren't following them. The biggest concern while driving wasn't the traffic, it was the police motorcycles. I think they were having more fun than we were. Every time we got through an intersection they had to pass everyone to get to the next intersection before we got

there. They had no problem splitting between you and oncoming traffic or passing you on the inside through a roundabout. The Lyford Cay setting was beautiful. The cars were parked in front of the complex for a concourse display. The overall winner was a gentleman from France who brought a 206 Dino prototype. While we were having lunch someone managed to get his program signed by Sean Connery. I went back outside and of course he was no-



Opening ceremony at "The Fish Fry".



Big grin on Mike's face after the hill climb. His passenger was a corner worker from Wales.

where to be found. After taking the very long way to Lyford Cay we took the direct route back to the paddock. Who had bragging rights for top speed? The lead motorcycle officer asked Derek Bell how fast he was going because at 140 mph Derek was catching him. Derek replied 141.

That evening was a pure social event. We had a dinner gathering at the John Watling's Rum distillery. John was famous pirate. We were serenaded by a local symphony. There were a few of the local's street cars on the grounds to enjoy while we traded stories about the 007 tour. It was nice end to a long day.

There was not a lot scheduled for Friday so we had some personal time. We did have a car show at the "fish fry" in the evening. This is an area where there are many restaurants all in a row right down from Junkanoo Beach and the paddock. The cars were all on display for everyone to enjoy. We met three women who live about a half hour from where we live in Wisconsin. They left their husbands at home and came to the Bahamas to watch the Packer game. Only Packer fans will find that completely normal.

The hill climb was on deck for Saturday. Both

the cars and the carts would run the hill. It was a hill and I mean a hill. The high point of the island is only about 150 foot of elevation. At the top of the hill was an old fort. The organizers did a good job of adding some chicanes to the course to raise the excitement. We got to do a reconnaissance run of the course so we knew what we were in for. This was a tight course complete with concrete chicanes and metal containment fences. My wife Deb went with me as a co-pilot. I did my best to behave but she was not comfortable with my driving and decided to give up her seat. She offered it to one of the workers of the event. He was an older gentleman from Wales who had owned many XK120's and XK140's. He went and got something that resembled a bicycle helmet and we got in line to make a run. The run started with a hard left turn. I proceeded to slide the car almost sideways. This is not all that difficult with a stock XK120. The car has a lot of body roll and the 6.00 x 16 bias ply tires have all the stick of banana skins. I correct and head for the first concrete chicane. I used a little more self control but still slid the car around the rest of the course. After 10 cars took their turn up the hill, we all headed back down. After we got out of the car the gentleman from Wales

took off his bicycle helmet, looked at me and said, "Yeah, that's just how I remember them." I made four runs that day and each time the poor old tires were screaming giving the illusion that I was going twice as fast as I actually was.

After everyone put their cars away and we walked back along Junkanoo Beach. We invaded one of the beach bars to enjoy a beverage or two to end the day. We all signed our names across the front of the building structure to commemorate the 2013 Speed Week Revival. The atmosphere reminded me of a Bahamas version of Siebken's bar in Elkhart Lake.

The last day for the event was Sunday. That would be the full course race day. It started out with a drivers meeting and a delay. Course marshals found people and dogs wandering the course. They took an hour to add more fencing and clear the course. They were confident there would no people walking the course. There was no promise about the dogs. We would have been ready too, except a truck had dropped a bunch of oil on course. Ok, one more hour and now we were ready to go. We started once again with a reconnaissance run. Deb rode along again. The comfort level or should I say un-comfort level was the same as the hill climb. The course had a nice mix of features. My favorite was the front

straight that ran right along Junkanoo Beach. It was so beautiful it was like a scene from a movie. The course had one chicane that was very tight, and yes it was concrete. Our new friend from Belgium chose not to run the course. I offered him a ride for my second run. The session was three laps. We proceeded to do our best, sliding it around the course. Being the oldest car, with I'm sure the least horsepower, we put on the best show we could. I'm sure the squealing tires added 10 mph to my top end and reduced my lap times by a couple of seconds. By the last lap the car added a little two step hop in its slide. We came off track and parked the car in the paddock. Deb came over and said there was something hanging down from the car. I bent down and took a look. There was the arm from the rear lever shock hanging down. Without it being attached to the frame there is no shock dampening. That explains the new hop in its step. It was time to call it quits for the day. The old girl had shown herself well. It ran flawlessly and I had fixed the electrical problems, hopefully for good. Being Lucas, I make no promises. The rear lever shocks were the only things left of the chassis that I hadn't re-done from the partial Argentina restoration. Maybe that's where the saying "if you want anything done right, do it yourself" was created.

There's another funny thing about racers, racecars and events. I went to Speed Week with the intent of touring and doing parade laps. Somehow that concept went out the window with the first left turn. My XK120 had quite a bit of race history in Argentina. Its last race was February 1st 1953 in the Grand Premio of Buenos Aires. Just over 60 years later in another country she got to relive a little glory. I have no doubt that she hadn't been run that hard since then. If a car could smile, its smile would have almost been as big as the drivers.



Siebkins by the sea. Post race drinking spot where drivers signed the structure above the bar.



Classifieds:

You too can own a cover car. This issue's cover car is for sale by Mike Pixley.

I know I'll regret this, but I'm reluctantly putting up my 1969 S4 SE FHC for sale. My goal was to make a car that felt like a FF for the street, race reliably in vintage events and satisfy my sculptural education in pure aesthetic joy. Dave Bean told me he thought an Élan with 26R flares rivaled the voluptuousness of a 427 Cobra and after having done the bodywork I have to agree.

Purists may balk, but I've gone to great lengths to lighten and simplify the car in ways I imagine Chapman would approve, while maintaining the aesthetics of the 60' s. Some concessions will not be for everyone, such as the lack of heater or having to manually raise or stow the headlights from under the hood. Beyond that it still maintains functional turn signals, wipers, emergency flashers and interior lights. I love survivors and although the car received a professional paint job within this past year the interior remains mostly stock and certainly shows the patina of age I think most will appreciate.

The TC has been left stock with longevity in mind. Semi-close ratio box, 3.55 rear end. New water pump, oil cooler and accusump. Hawker dry cell battery, ATL 10 gal. fuel cell, elec. fuel pump, 7 lb. halon remote fire system, transponder, VSCDA log book. Custom roll bar that ties in/ triangulates the rear shock towers, 5pt. harness, oil press. light, front adjustable A-arms, Spax adjustable shocks, 180lb. springs front, 120lb. rear, narrow adjustable rear spring perch kit . Brand new knock on 6x13" aluminum minilites shod with A70 Hoosiers. Car weighs approximately 1430 lbs.

<<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rgdNTqWG6EI>> <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rgdNTqWG6EI>

\$32,000. Mike Pixley 517 490-9423 pixleym@msu.edu

Ported D-production big value TC weber head, high lift cams, +.40 pistons also available.



Classifieds:

MG Midget - AH sprite
Fiberglass Hood
New - Never Installed
Hinge Hardware Moulded In
Will Ship
\$175



Charlie Powell
740 525 6507
Columbus Ohio



Etc:

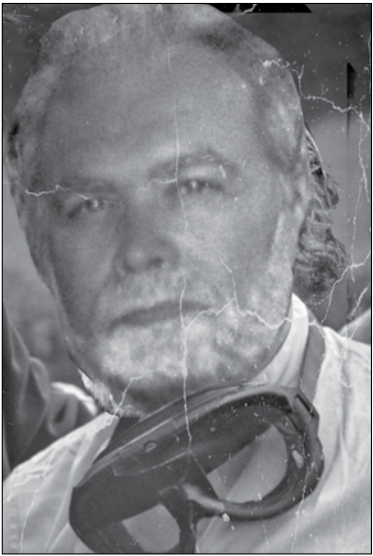
His exhaust notes hint of grass and oak. He has no use for the rear-view mirror. His brake linings are always silver. Double clutching is redundant to him. Mario asks for his autograph.

He is.....the Vintage Racer.

“I rarely race anymore, but when I do I borrow Burt Levy’s car.”

“Race safely my friends.”

The Vintage Racer will be a regular feature. Please feel free to submit your Vintage Racer suggestions for future issues. Send to chris@chrisbonk.com



VINTAGE GRAND PRIX AU GRATTAN XXVIII

GREAT ON TRACK

GREAT OFF TRACK

AUGUST 15-17, 2014
GRATTAN RACEWAY, BELDING, MI

JUST GREAT

CAN AM FESTIVAL CHALLENGE RACES WITH VARAC (FEATURING G70)

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