



#80 John Hamilton, 1965 MGB; #176 Dean Tatterton, 1962 Warwick GT.

photo by Roger Schleicher

VDCA Finale

Roebling Road, GA December 11-13, 2009

-story by Paul Buttrose

This event marked the tenth anniversary of VDCA's existence. Roebling Road Raceway was the sight of Alex Quattlebaum's first event to organize the club. VDCA will be celebrating its 10 years of existence throughout 2010 beginning with our inaugural event at Road Atlanta in February.

Weather should not be the lead for any article on a motor racing event, particularly the genteel sport of Vintage Racing; however, aside from one memorable frost, the VDCA Finale at Roebling Road has been celebrated in relatively mild weather for the past five years. After all, Savannah is on the same latitude as San Diego. Rumor has it there was one weekend of rain shortly after the inaugural VDCA event at Roebling Road, but that is beyond the memory retention level of any VDCA members in my circle.

For those of us fortunate enough to even have a race meeting to attend in December, we do monitor NOAA reports prior to loading up as an extra "woolly" may be necessary. The entry deadline revealed 120 entrants were planning to

hit the highway for Georgia. A massive weather system heading across the country proved challenging for our Mid-West and northern drivers, however. Friday evening revealed a modest and understandable drop as slightly over 100 entrants registered. The entire Gang of Six VDCA Board of Directors was in attendance: Chief Steward Bud Merrill and five directors who entered to race.

Qualifying commenced in cold but dry conditions on Friday morning when Groups 3&4 saw a five strong Spitfire dog fight with Leigh Derby reigning. Next in line was the Elva F-Jr of Tom Grudovich sparring with Hugh Tompkins' Abarth mixed in with a thirteen strong Formula Vee train led by The Shadowfax. Tim Slater's silver grey "Macau" Spitfire led 1 GP followed by two Sprites where Buzz Merchiewitz nipped Brian MacEarchern by two tenths. Spitfires and Sprites provided the most thrilling dices of the weekend.

Front runners in the Sports 2000 crowd stayed extremely close with Rob Hibdon taking the pole from Peter Krause by .2 sec. Groups 6&8 provided the picturesque sight of an assortment of well prepared "tin top" marques, with Les Bowers showing the way in his Alfa GTV. Newcomer

Henry Costanzo must have been very satisfied with the debut of his immaculately prepared Datsun 240Z; he was "in the mix," sandwiched between the very fast BMW 2002s of Skip Bryan and Bob Breed.

In Group 9 Scott and Charles Ebert in the Ford



photo by Kaus Ortmann

#21 Ed Daniels, 1920 Ford Model T; #773 Hugh Tompkins, 1967 Fiat Abarth.

Dreyer Special were running strong at the front with George Pardee in the MGTf followed by the "how does he do it?" 1920 Ford Model T of Ed Daniels. Unfortunately a compression hike in the power plant of the Dreyer Special was disturbing news to the standard head gasket, and the Ebert Aluminum bus headed home early.

The final event of the afternoon was the much heralded Happy Hour Bracket Challenge Classic. Four car teams take the field and try to run as close to Friday's practice times as they can manage. While our entrants are usually led to believe that Doug Meis chooses the winner of the Happy Hour Bracket Challenge Classic in random fashion, the winner is actually the team with the best score in most cases. Creative team names and additional miscellaneous variables do count.

Saturday dawned somewhat colder with



photo by Roger Schleicher

#28 Paul Buttrose, 1968 Zink C4.

commencement of the forecast rain while a good number of stalwarts headed out for the third Qualifying session. Alternative options included the warmth of the snack shack, hotel rooms or a tour of the nearby Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum.

Race 1 Saturday afternoon was for Group 8 and lone entrant Dave (toughened-up) Handy completed ten rain soaked laps while his cheering squad at the start finish ensured his fastest loop was two laps from the finish. The next race was for Groups 6 & 8 which saw a victory for David Bearden in his Porsche 911. The Formula Vees were moved into Group 9 when the Pre-War field virtually dissolved so Mike Jackson ran away from the Formula Vee fleet while George Pardee finished eight laps in his Model T. Groups 3 and 4 were last up for Saturday's final Feature race with the Fiat Spyder of Tim Butler taking the checker over the Fiat 124 of John Tremblay while not far behind there was wonderful dicing between a mix including a Mercedes, Volvo, Porsche, and three MGB's.

The warmest location Saturday may have been next to the large tin smoker where the aroma of a slowly cooking pig filled the air. A green flag for dinner was scheduled for five PM. The oysters had been gathered, and as the first batch emerged from the steamer, we witnessed the largest grid for the weekend! From a wet, almost deserted paddock while the rain stopped, more and more people emerged, good draft beer flowed--Pig Pickin' and Oyster Shuckin' was underway. People even came BACK to the track for dinner.

VDCA founder Alex Quattlebaum even showed up to help consume raw oysters and visit with his long time friends. This event marked the tenth anniversary of the club's initial organization and the realization of Quattlebaum's vision for Vintage racing.

Assistant "oyster steamer" Chief of Tech Beau Gabel who ALWAYS heads home from Roebing Road with a few raw oysters in his swag was grieving at this extraordinary and hungry turnout. It was a really warm and convivial gathering, with lively conversation in all corners and a wonderful reminder of the VDCA theme "Great cars, great competition, great company and great food!"

The evening wrapped with Doug Meis making the presentation of the ONLY race trophies VDCA awards at the December Finale: "Shortbus Racing," Mark Gobble, Larry Blankenship, Bill Shields and Marcus Jones, won Fridays Happy Hour Bracket Challenge Classic with a combined score of 3.107 seconds off their target times. Team Porcupine would have been second, but they won last year so Doug threw out their score. Second place went to the "Beasty Bugs" team of Bugeye Sprites driven by Buzz Merchlewitz, Brian MacEachern, Doug West and Jim Hofer who were only 4.142 seconds off of their target times. The driver closest to his target time was Peter Krause who was .065 off his target time and who also posted the fastest lap of the

race. An award also went to Ray Morgan for missing his target time by the greatest margin: he was 6.5 seconds too fast.

Those sleeping "a night of the just" had no idea just how much it had rained and howled early Sunday until stepping outside to the warmer and very moist air Sunday morning. A lack of activity in the lake-like paddock, collapsed portable tents and an inch or two of water across the entire track at Turns 5 and 6 reinforced the idea that there would be very little racing activity for some time. According to the track manager rainfall in excess of four inches had been recorded since midnight Saturday. Various attempts to clear water from Turn 5 included a front-end loader and an assortment of emergency vehicles completing lap after lap. Around 10 am Chief Steward Bud Merrill announced the Enduro had been canceled but there would be an "all comers" warm up followed by a drivers' meeting to make a decision on the afternoon activities.

Voyeurs gathered at Turn 5 for the warm up to see a twenty-five strong group head through the puddles in a variety of cars from comfortable looking BMW's down to the Model T Ford of Ed Daniels and Harry Reynolds in his Kieft C53 F-3. Strong throttle award went to Tim Slater in his Spitfire; then again, based upon his British heritage driving well in the rain is assumed.

Consensus at the Driver's Meeting resulted in twelve BMW's heading out at noon for a twenty-five minute timed race, and providing the rain held off, there would be an "all comers" timed race of the same duration for the VDCA entrants. Puddles remained on the track, but the rain held off, and nineteen cars representing eight classes lined up for the start.

Peter Krause scurried away and took line honors after some very quick early laps in his Tiga; Leigh Derby's Spitfire continued a winning weekend, followed by the Horn/Handy Formula Ford then Mike Jackson, well clear of his pursuer Paul Buttrose. Buttrose was led by the class winning Abarth of



photo by Roger Schleicher

#29 Bill Stelcher, Ford Riley Speedster.

Hugh Tompkins. Group 3 saw the most contenders: John Hamilton's MGB barely managed to keep Beau Gabel and his Turner at bay. After three laps all times dropped off except for the dicing BMW 2002 of Bob Breed who nipped Carl Wells driving Bob Youngdahl's Lotus Europa as they had the closest contest and recorded their best times with two laps remaining.

As with the entire weekend this last race of the year saw some "four wheels off" activity caused by the wet conditions, but it was another outstanding incident-free weekend of VDCA fun. One member summed up the weekend in a comment to Chief Steward Bud Merrill who concurred, "Regardless of the conditions, there is nowhere else I would rather be." And so say all of us.

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photo by Roger Schleicher

#91 Peter Krause, 1984 Tiga SC-84.

ENTRANT LIST

GROUP 1

1 1CS S.Blanton/67 Morris Minor
 1 1CS H.Tompkins/67 Fiat Abarth
 1 1DSR D.White/NTM MK III
 1 1FJ T.Grudovich/60 Elva 200 FJr.
 1 1FP F.Danovitz/64 Triumph Spitfire
 1 1FP R.Stewart/67 Triumph Spitfire
 1 1FP M.Craig/72 Triumph Spitfire
 1 1FP J.Johnson/64 Triumph Spitfire
 1 1FP J.Jones/67 Austin Healey Sprite
 1 1FP S.Heath/59 MGA
 1 1FP S.Adelman/60 Alfa Romeo Sprint Zagato
 1 1FP L.Smith/62 MG Midget
 1 1FPB.Gabel/59 Turner Mk I
 1 1FP L.Derby/68 Triumph Spitfire
 1 1FP Q.Derby/68 Triumph Spitfire
 1 1FPR.Bordner/72 MG Midget
 1 1FV R.Yow/68 Lynx FV
 1 1FV J.Fuchs/69 Kellison FV
 1 1FV P.Buttrose/68 Zink C4
 1 1FV P.Meis/69 Zink C-4
 1 1FV C. Fred/Clark/69 Lynx B FV
 1 1FV G.Drysdale/68 ASP
 1 1FV J.Harkness/68 The Ringwraith
 1 1FV M.Jackson/69 Shadowfax FV
 1 1FV D.Chesanow/66 Venus FV
 1 1FV M.Ennis/69 Lynx B FV
 1 1FV B.Lemmon/65 Formcar
 1 1FV D.White/69 Zink Z5 F-V
 1 1FV M.Jones/66 Zink F-Vee
 1 1GP B.Youngdahl/69 Ginetta G1
 1 1GP T.Slater/65 Triumph Spitfire
 1 1GP D.Meis/67 Honda S800
 1 1GP J.Paul Preston/64 Triumph Spitfire
 1 1HP J.Daniels/59 Austin Healey Sprite
 1 1HP J.Hofer/59 Austin Healey Bugeye
 1 1HP B.Merchlewitz/59 Austin Healey
 1 1HP G.Barnhart/60 A-H Sprite
 1 1HP D.West/60 A-H Bugeye Sprite
 1 1HP B.MacEachern/59 Austin Healey
 1 1HP R.Brown/60 Austin Healey

GROUP 2, 5 & 7

2,5&7 2CF B.Bruce /80 Crossle 40F
 2,5&7 2FF D.Handy/70 Lola T200 FF

2,5&7 2FF J. Horne/70 Lola T200 FF
 2,5&7 2FF B.Charlton/76 Zinc 210C
 2,5&7 5D G.King/70 Royale RP4
 2,5&7 7BSR L.Wilson/72 Royale RP-17
 2,5&7 7BSR L.Wilson/74 Bobsy SR6
 2,5&7 7HS2 P.Krause/84 Tiga SC-84
 2,5&7 7S2 B.Hooks/86 Swift DB-2
 2,5&7 7S2 R.Hibdon/86 Swift DB2
 2,5&7 7S2 R.Kornegay/83 Royale S2000M
 2,5&7 7S2 M.Gompels/84 Royale RP42

GROUP 3 & 4

3&4 3CP L.Oddi/68 Triumph TR250
 3&4 3CP R.Schnabel/65 Volvo P1800S
 3&4 3CP T.Turner /67 Alfa Romeo Giulia Super
 3&4 3DP B.McKenzie/66 MGB
 3&4 3DP D.Marshall/65 Triumph TR4A
 3&4 3DP G.Hammer/60 Elva Courier MKII
 3&4 3DP G.Wright/61 Triumph TR-4
 3&4 3DP B.Deanes/62 Triumph TR4
 3&4 3DPR.Crownshield/69 Alfa Duetto
 3&4 3EP M.J. Turner/65 Turner MK III GT
 3&4 3EP G.Miller/68 Morgan 4/4
 3&4 3EP R.Morrison/72 MGB
 3&4 3EP F.McConnell/67 MGB
 3&4 3EP H.Giffin/59 Elva Courier
 3&4 3EP M.Gobble/59 Elva Courier
 3&4 3EP G.Adelman/65 Turner MKIII
 3&4 3EP O.Adelman/65 Turner MK III
 3&4 3EP J.Cox/67 Porsche 912
 3&4 3EP T. Kunze/74 MGBGT
 3&4 3EP J.Hamilton/65 MGB
 3&4 3EP Stirling Heath/71 MGB GT
 3&4 3EP Dave Bondon/67 Morgan 4/4
 3&4 3EP Timothy Butler/70 Fiat Spyder
 3&4 3EP B.Shields/64 MGB
 3&4 3EP L.Blankenship/67 MGB
 3&4 3EP P.Dunn/63 Morgan 4/4
 3&4 3EP J.Tremblay/72 Fiat 124
 3&4 3EP J.Tremblay/72 Fiat 124

3&4 3EP D.Tetterton/62 Warwick GT
 3&4 3FM R.Morgan/64 Merlyn MK6
 3&4 3FP V. Carl George/59 MGA
 3&4 3FP P.Van Rossum/66 Mercedes Benz 230SL
 3&4 3FP J.Poteet/62 Morgan 4/4
 3&4 3FP B.Watkin/59 MGA
 3&4 4DM F.Burke/62 Cooper Monaco Ferrari
 3&4 4E T.Grudovich/62 Lola MK1
 3&4 4M A.Quattlebaum/55 Cooper T39

GROUP 6

6&8 6ASR J.Barber/63 Jaguar E-Type
 6&8 6BP R.Demetrius/73 Porsche 911
 6&8 6BP J.A.Sybrandt/66 Sunbeam Tiger

6&8 8BS1 B.Breed/72 BMW 2002
 6&8 8BS1 S.Bryan/72 BMW 2002
 6&8 8CP G.Dillow/71 Lotus Elan +2
 6&8 8CP C.Wells/67 Mercedes Europa
 6&8 8CP B.Desloge/72 Lotus Europa
 6&8 8CP S.Lipsky/71 Datsun 240Z
 6&8 8CP P.Needs/67 Lotus Elan
 6&8 8DP S.Nettlehip/70 Lotus 7
 6&8 8DP C.Cone/67 Alfa Duetto
 6&8 8DP B.Youngdahl/62 Elva Courier
 6&8 8EP T.Fish/74 Alfa Romeo Spider
 6&8 8RS Randy Kornegay/71 Mazda RX2
 6&8 8X Henry Costanzo/73 Datsun



photo by John Harkness

Hark Alex and Mike Jackson.

6&8 6BP T.Vlasak/65 Ford Mustang
 6&8 6BP S.Collins/72 Porsche 911
 6&8 6BP D.Bearden/72 Porsche
 6&8 6BP G.Ruffino/83 Porsche 911SC
 6&8 8AP R.Tolman/79 Ferrari 308GTB
 6&8 8BP H.Parke/65 Ginetta G4
 6&8 8BP R.Salomon/61 Ginetta G4
 6&8 8BS1 L.Bowers/71 Alfa GTV

GROUP 9

9 21 E.Daniels/20 Ford Model T
 9 9 B.Stelcher/29 Ford Riley Speedster
 9 9C H.Reynolds/52 Kieft C53 F3
 9 9C G.Pardee/54 MG TF
 9 9E S.Ebert/39 Dreyer Ford Special
 9 9E C.Ebert/39 Dreyer Ford Special

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