



PIT SIGNALS



LATE BRAKING NEWS FOR THE VARAC VINTAGE RACER - BY JEREMY SALE AUG 2012



LEFT
Frank Mount at the Pittsburgh Vintage Grand Prix. Our report inside from Alain Raymond.
BELOW
“Wonderful Waterford....a great success” according to Shane and Peter Viccary.



RIGHT
Jon Brett and Kim hung out with some of the F1 crowd at the 2012 Goodwood Festival of Speed.....



Hey, it's that Andrew Celovsky guy, relaxing with a beer “somewhere in France”. It seems he's now sponsored by Saxo Bank. Not content with racing cars Andrew decided to find out what it's like to ride the Tour de France. Not that easy.....



ABOVE: Un embarras de richesses..go to Mt-Tremblant or Waterford? VARAC was split but in the end it seems that everyone had a good time. Alain Raymond sends in his report from La Belle Province. Merci, Alain!

Wonderful Waterford!

Peter Viccary and Don Hooton

PV: "It's such a shame that Mont Tremblant and Waterford were on the same weekend this year. Those of us who chose Waterford, like our friends in Quebec, had a tremendous time. The Friday night fish fry and in town car show, Saturday meet and greet (all the shrimp you could eat) and banquet all contributed to an enjoyable weekend. Thanks to Joel Hershoren! We'll be back.

Racing on a tight little whirligig like Waterford with 20 near identical little open wheel racing cars is a breath taking experience. It is for moments like this that we spend all the time and money and over come the frustrations just to be there. For an old

novice like myself, I just try to stay with the pack for as long as I can. Then I settle in and watch the show. I have the best seat in the house."

Peter Viccary



Above, the Triumph of Mike "Beermeister" DeWeerd



At right: Vytas Svedas in his lovely Alfa Romeo

DH: "What a great weekend! Joel Hershoren did a fantastic job organizing and went out of his way to make sure every was appreciated and welcome. The track is narrow and busy with lots of challenging turns and a few interesting elevation changes. A great small bore track. I broke a half shaft in the Sunday morning race and when the afternoon race group ahead of mine headed out on track I was still under the car bolting up the diff and the driveshaft. John G. and Colin Gibson arrived to help quickly followed by Sean Gibson to spell off John as the wee Scot was in my race group. Colin told me to finish underneath, put in the gear oil and get my suit on while they finished installing the half shafts and torqued the wheels on. I actually was on the mock grid before the 5 minute call. What a great group of people we have in VARAC! I recommend if you have not experienced Waterford that you put it on your list of places to try. Hopefully the Mt T date doesn't conflict next year. I certainly want to go back." *Don Hooton*

John Greenwood reports from Waterford

Waterford Hill race weekend, what more needs to be said, it's a HOOT!! What's not to like about this weekend? The entry fee is \$330.00 (plus a special 10% discount to returning entrants = \$300.50) for a three-day weekend. My motel is about three minutes away and it only costs 58 bucks a night! That's IT. No bloody extras tagged on, hmmm, this feels so strange!

It is quite possible for anyone from Toronto's west end to leave early Friday morning and still get there for ALL Friday practice sessions that start in earnest at 11 am. Waterford is only about 4 hours from Hwys 400 and 401 and they accept your CASC annual scrut stamp.

On track activities start at 10 am, great!! Casual brekkie and away we go. There are five classes Friday and this means three sessions for everyone, although prior to my third session we received a warning, FROM THE FUNCTIONING PADDOCK LOUDSPEAKERS that a thunderstorm was approaching in two minutes. So we stood down for about 20 minutes until the storm passed. This is so unlike our PREMIER tracks here that don't seem to have functioning paddock loudspeakers and I can't count the times that I have sat, unnecessarily, in pouring rain or hail on mock grids in CTMP or Mt-T.

The race weekend is broken down into grids that are somewhat different than other clubs, but it seems to work. There is a race group here to suit EVERY car in the VARAC inventory. And the racing is lots and lots of fun. If you miss a session, go see the bosses and they will work with you to try to sort it all out. The drivers' meeting seems more like a sensible discussion and the drivers are given credit for being adults. (I don't remember "blend line" being mentioned!) I could write on and on about Waterford's signature parties and the friendly way entrants are treated by the organizers but you just had to be there. As the saying goes, "What happens in Waterford...stays in Waterford! Nah, just teasing! The parties are great or at least what I remember of them all.

Friday all day practice went well except for Don Hooton, who suffered a clutch hydraulic problem that kept him being towed in all day, the problem proved to be somewhat difficult to diagnose. Don persevered with this and got it fixed by Sunday-only to break a halfshaft in the Sunday morning race. Undeterred Don then got stuck into this repair and worked really hard to get the car fixed just in time, he was rewarded with a "come from behind " first in class and a special trophy presentation of "hard driver of the event " award.

More on Waterford from John Greenwood

The group one races were led by the really fast Minis of Terry Milnes and Dyrk Patterson (first time there) who also won the 2.5 litre Trans-Am feature race. I managed to keep everyone else from bothering the Minis and was first in Class on Saturday, and first overall on Sunday afternoon (well, the Minis had gone home!) Vitas in his Alfa was a big winner, having won his class Saturday and Sunday, then winning his class again in Trans-Am.

There was also a stand-alone Formula Vee race group where Peter and Shane Viccary were kept very busy in a 23-car field. It goes without saying that Doug Elcomb ran like a top and was first in class. Alistair Maclean was working hard in approximately fifth overall in his final race until a left front stub axle broke in half! Luckily no real harm done. (Wouldn't care to know what would happen on corner 1 or 8 at CTMP.) The VARAC guys were having a great time and picking up the lions share of the trophies. I have my room booked for next year! John G



OOPS, did I forget to mention the GIRLS? Yes, we had on hand Miss Waterford Hills and Miss Trans-Am, who paraded around the paddock all weekend and carried a board to warn everyone not to cross over the grid after the one minute warning. It was hilarious...and brought many more people to the mock grid just to get close to them. Of course this didn't get me out of my race face zone (yeah, right...)

Pictured above, in a conspicuously good mood, is our intrepid Pit Signals reporter Johnny G, with Mr Smooth, aka Fred Samson and the Stig, aka Stefan Wiesen.

L'Étape du Tour *

Par Andrew Celovsky



* *Editors note: According to Wikipedia L'Étape du Tour (French for 'stage of the Tour') is an organized mass participation cyclosportive event that allows amateur cyclists to race over the same route as a Tour de France stage. First held in 1993, and now organized by the Amaury Sport Organisation (ASO), in conjunction with Vélo Magazine, it takes place each July, normally on a Tour rest day.*

L'Étape du Tour is normally held over mountain roads in either the Pyrenees or French Alps. Around 8,500 riders participate - many traveling from other countries to compete - and the event takes place on roads closed by the police to other traffic, with refreshment stops and medical support provided along the route.

Just back from a fabulous cycling holiday in France. Oh so much fun cycling up the Alps. There are two ways to tackle L'Étape du Tour, the right way, or the very wrong way. Quel dommage...I chose the latter.

Up at 4:30 AM to be in the starting position for 7:00 AM. Lovely! A light rain in the pre-dawn, facing a 150 km course, starting off with two HC climbs in succession for myself and the other 8,000 cyclists. (Climbs are categorized, in increasing order of difficulty from 4,3,2,1, and HC. With 1 being a crazy climb, and HC being beyond crazy climb; I think the French refer to an HC climb as simply 'beyond category')

Unfortunately Lufthansa had thoughtfully misplaced my bike somewhere in Germany. Luckily the tour company found me a decent loaner, but I was still on an unfamiliar machine. My bike eventually re-appeared, but well after the event.

The first HC climb was a 24 km hill called the Col de la Madelaine. (*Wiki note; (el. 1,993 m.) a high mountain pass in the Alps... it has been described as "beautiful, but heartbreaking"*) The second was to be the 20 km Col de Glandon, (el. 1924 m.)

My strategy was to pass all the other 8,000 cyclists at the start of the Madelaine. (*Similar to Andrew's strategy at Mosport. Ed.*) I got about halfway up the hill before starting to cramp very badly... At the three quarter mark I was in serious trouble, but I kept going and after coming to a dead slow crawl, managed to make the crest. I just barely beat the referee car to the crest. I should explain that the referee car is the time limit for the course. If you fall behind it you are out!

Then followed a scary descent off the mountain to the start of the Glandon. At this point I was physically destroyed and was facing a second 20 km ascent!

However, I had finally learned my lesson and paced myself up the Glandon, taking food and water on board. (I had figured I did not need food or water up the Madelaine.... another of my bad decisions). Unfortunately about two thirds of the way up the hill the referee car caught me... and I was told to stop. "Ha... you have to catch me," was my reply as I stood up and accelerated away up the hill. Truly, a final mistake in my coffin. My legs were like jello, I made it to within a kilometer of the summit.....I could see the top. Alas, I couldn't stay ahead of the time limit. So close, with both big hills completed, and only a Category 1 and Category 2 hill remaining left and lots of descending, I was put on the DNF bus. Oh, the humiliation...worse than running out of fuel at Mosport.!



Having shamed myself in the étape... I climbed Alp d'Huez and the Col de Sarenne back-to-back a couple of days later (just for fun). No problem this time. I just paced myself, and took on food and water at regular intervals. Pretty easy actually.... even had lots of kick left to sprint the final 500 metres of each climb. I can't wait to redeem myself next year. It was so much fun!

À la prochaine! Andrew C.

PS. After the cycling Sandra and I went to Monaco. What a crazy place to put a race track! Monaco is built into the side of a cliff, with barely enough room to walk.... a race course???? That's crazy, but the Monaco Grand Prix definitely goes on life's bucket list.

2012 Goodwood Festival of Speed

by Jon Brett

The Festival of Speed is the largest motoring garden party in the world – a unique summer weekend that brings together an impossibly heady mix of cars, stars and motor sport ‘royalty’ to create the largest car culture event in the world. Held in the immaculate grounds of Goodwood House, this annual hill-climb event is a true celebration of motor sport and all things automotive.

One would expect rain when you visit England, but it was an astonishing amount that was reported on the news upon our arrival. The most rain recorded for May and June in history. People and cars and everything were swept away in a disastrous flood in the mid-north and it looked ominous everywhere else. Fortunately, Kim and I somehow managed to avoid all of this.



We landed at Gatwick, a very well laid out airport, and took the train to Portsmouth where we were scheduled to meet our tour guide for the Goodwood experience. A very nice area called Gun Wharf Quays was our base for the next three days, where there are loads of high-end restaurants, museums, walks and views. The only disadvantage was that the hotel was directly across from a nightclub. The young girls and guys dressed to the nines would mill about early on and then pour out in a mess after hours. But we were so tired it really did not matter.

On the bus to Goodwood we had a smooth run to the event, but the previous days rain had soaked the parking lot and no heavy vehicles were allowed in to the mud bog. So we parked at the Goodwood track and took a shuttle, which was very convenient, as we did not have to slog it.

The event itself is amazing, so much to see and do. Huge displays by the major manufacturers, each trying to out-do the other. As BMW owners, Kim and I just produced our car key fob and gained entry to the upper pavilion to enjoy free soft drinks, and hot tea. We had lunch there as well, away from the masses. And it was busy, estimates hover around 35,000 people. But the organization was excellent and everything was kept clean and tidy.



The stars of the show are the cars, but there were many other stars there as well: Emerson Fittipaldi, Jacky Ickx, Sir Stirling Moss, Sir Jackie Stewart, and Dan Gurney, to name a few. Also there were current stars such as Sebastian Vettel, Jenson Button, Nick Heidfeld and Lewis Hamilton. Each had a turn driving something glorious up the hill. The modern F1 cars have an ungodly sound, and the drivers were not afraid to do donuts and smoke shows. The best trick seemed to be locking the front wheels and then going full throttle to smoke the front tires off.

A great variety of cars went up the hill and we enjoyed watching from the various grandstands. Some cars went off and smashed into the hay bales. The United Oil Products Shadow Can-Am car, you know the black one that Darth Vader would drive, slid off into the hay bales right in front of us,

There was something for everyone. Motorcyclists could watch trials exhibitions, motocross aerobatics, and of course the old and new bikes racing up the hill pulling big wheelies. At the top of the hill there was a rally stage, with a variety of vintage machinery testing the track. You could book a helicopter ride, go for a ride in a high performance dune buggy, drive a Honda motocross bike, or just sip beer and relax and watch the aerial displays. The F35 Eurofighter display was amazing, as well as the two Tornados chasing after each other.

I have never seen such a display of fine racing machinery. All three six-wheeled formula one cars were present, as well as a number of Group C machinery including Jaguar, Mercedes and Porsche. A few Can-Am cars were doing their best to put down power as well, including the aforementioned Shadow and a McLaren.



Walking through the paddock was just a scene of eye candy. Where do you look first? Is it the historic F1 cars or the Jaguar XJR Group C or the vintage Mercedes Benz Silver Arrows? All were right in front of us as we walked by in admiration.

Lord March put on a great garden party, a fantastic sculpture adorned his front yard, which was a figure eight (of sorts) with F1 machinery mounted upon it at different angles. One would think they were just display cars, but oil was dripping onto the sculpture from the engines!



Lotus was the featured marque and many examples of Lotus finery graced the track. My favorite was Mario Andretti's John Player Special F1 car.

Two days at Goodwood!
Glad we could enjoy the experience.

TTFN!

Jon Brett.





The above artwork of André Rousseau's Fiat is by Doug Garrison of The Garrison Studio

Legends of Motorsports at Circuit Mont Tremblant

by Alain Raymond

As you may have heard by now, the third season of Legends of Motorsports by HMSA ran at Mt-Tremblant July 27 to 29 under sunny and warm conditions. The event was well organized with great hospitality (breakfast and lunch served for all three days) and ran on time and without major incidents.

Thanks to efforts by Chris Rupnik, Robert Searle and Del Bruce, VARAC was well represented by 28 cars, most running in Group 6 in the much debated "combined grid" of V/H and G70, while all monopostos were wisely gridded in Group 2 (Classic Monoposto). All told, VARAC members made up a third of the field, a fact well noted by HMSA.

In spite of the gorgeous weather, public attendance was very low. Among the culprits, the lack of publicity for the event in Quebec and the running of the huge and very popular Granby International Vintage Car Show on the same week-end. Another regrettable fact was the lack of Pre-War cars (only 2 were running for the last race) as well as the lack of small bore cars in our Group, which made it somewhat... boring for the few who can't break the 2:10 barrier. Yet no incident was reported all week-end in VARAC Group 6 in spite of the huge spread between the fastest cars (low 1:50s) and the slowest (2:20s), a testament to excellent driver behavior. Bravo!

Legends of Motorsports at Circuit Mont Tremblant

Photos by Jean-Marc Dugas. More photos at:

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/photodougs/sets/72157630832049786/>



Clockwise from above: The ever consistent Claude "Lotus" Gagné ran in Classic Monoposto Group 2 in the 1972 Lotus 61M. Another Shelby great, the 1965 Cobra, very nicely driven by James Farley, of Orchard Lake, MI. Great overhead shot of Anthony Polito's 1966 Shelby GT 350, a fitting tribute to the late Carroll Shelby. Newcomer from Quebec, Paul Bissonnette, in his nicely prepared 1967 Ford Mustang.



BTW, For 2013, HMSA has announced that the event will run two weeks earlier, July 12 to 14, and we were promised the presence of Can-Am and Bugatti. I can already hear the Can-Am thunder against the backdrop of the beautiful Laurentian Mountains. And I can promise you that the view of historic Bugattis roaring around Namerow will be a sight you will not soon forget! *Alain Raymond*

More photos at: http://www.flagworld.com/photos/v/2012/2012-07-29_001/

Pittsburgh Vintage Grand Prix 2012

*By Alain Raymond
Photos by Mike Matune*

An unusual event, to say the least. Those who have attended the PVGP will know what I mean. Of course, there is vintage car racing with some 160 cars ranging from the early 1900s to the late 1970s. Then there is the “track”, 2.33 miles of tortuous park streets, with shaky pavement, curbs, solid walls, trees and 22 turns, from wide sweepers to very, very tight hairpins and the notorious hay bale chicane intended to slow the field from 80 mph plus to about 20 mph. But PVGP is also more, much more: the “paddock” on Prospect Drive with cars lined up on both side (very much like in the 1950s), the down-hill starting grid on Hubbard street, the thousands of spectators lining the track on both sides and of course, the humungous classic car show in Schenley Park.



Alain's distinctive Fiat Abarth is a photographer's magnet!

This year's 30th anniversary event had a bonus feature on Friday evening: an all-comers parade with police escort to Forbes Avenue for a public race-car exhibit and beer and munchies party at the posh Orr's Jewellers, retailers of prestigious Tag Heuer watches. A very unusual – and appreciated – get-together indeed.

Pictured here by Mike Matune are a few of the racers who attended PVGP, some of whom drove 12 hours from Quebec! A worthwhile effort if you enjoy mixing racing “à l'ancienne”, socializing... and free beer. (Well, that's another story!)

For results and hundred of photos, check out www.pvgp.org



Above: David Holmes (1957 MGA) pursued by the 1963 Midget of Amyot Bachand

Pittsburgh Vintage Grand Prix

Photos by Mike Matune



Clockwise from above: VRG's Mark Palmer in his MGA. Joe Lightfoot's MGB looks for an outside pass on the MGA of Steve Schultz. Rick Presby's Jabro leads Amyot Bachand. Lining up for Saturday morning practice.

