



# PIT SIGNALS

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



## 63rd B.E.M.C. Spring Trophy Races held in glorious weather!

Those who were ready for the season patted themselves on the back as the event was held under beautiful, sunny skies. A great start to 2013 for V.A.R.A.C. racers.

## Congratulations B.E.M.C.!

Had it not been for the British Empire Motor Club and its members, who organized major motorsports events and also helped to develop racing circuits such as Edenvale, Harewood Acres and Mosport Park, it is very likely that motorsport in Canada would not be as successful as it is today. Formed originally in 1928 as a motorcycle racing club (its first event was a scramble), it has gone on to organize more motorsports events - including car and motorcycle races, hill climbs, ice races, scrambles, trials and rallies - than any other club in Canada. In 1958, the members - in a huge gamble - took an option on a piece of property north of Bowmanville and the club, with partners, operated Mosport until 1966. B.E.M.C. celebrates its 85th anniversary in 2013.

# Thanks!



Pit Signals wants to take time to thank some of the great photographers who allow us to use their terrific shots in this and other issues, Richard Coburn, top left, Vic Henderson, right, Peter Viccary, left. Thanks guys, it's much much appreciated. Don't forget VARAC members, your anecdotes and photos are always welcome! So don't delay! Send today! Trained operators are standing by...

Jeremy Sale.

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VARAC President Del Bruce congratulates BEMC's Doug McKenzie on the weather, the 63rd running of the Spring Trophy Races and of course, BEMC's 85th anniversary! Way to go, BEMC!



### VARAC and 2013 CASC Driving School

Left to right: Cole Piper (Porsche 944). Filip Jantzi, Hubert Lee (Porsche 944), Robert Metcalfe (MGB), Bob DeShane, Phil Clephan (Daimler SP250), Lino Baggio, Alistair Clarke (Porsche 944), John Greenwood, Ivan Samila (Lotus 7).  
*Shooter - Craig DeShane*

## Spring Trophy Races



Clockwise from top left: Chris Rupnik is a happy guy! Jim Holody had a fun time in his MGA. Above: "Hey Dad, the Alfa's still in one piece!" Anthony and Vitas Svedas. Left: "Bugeye Sprites Rule!" says Julie Wildman, though brother Ted didn't get as much running time in *his* Bugeye.....

*Photos by Peter Viccary.*

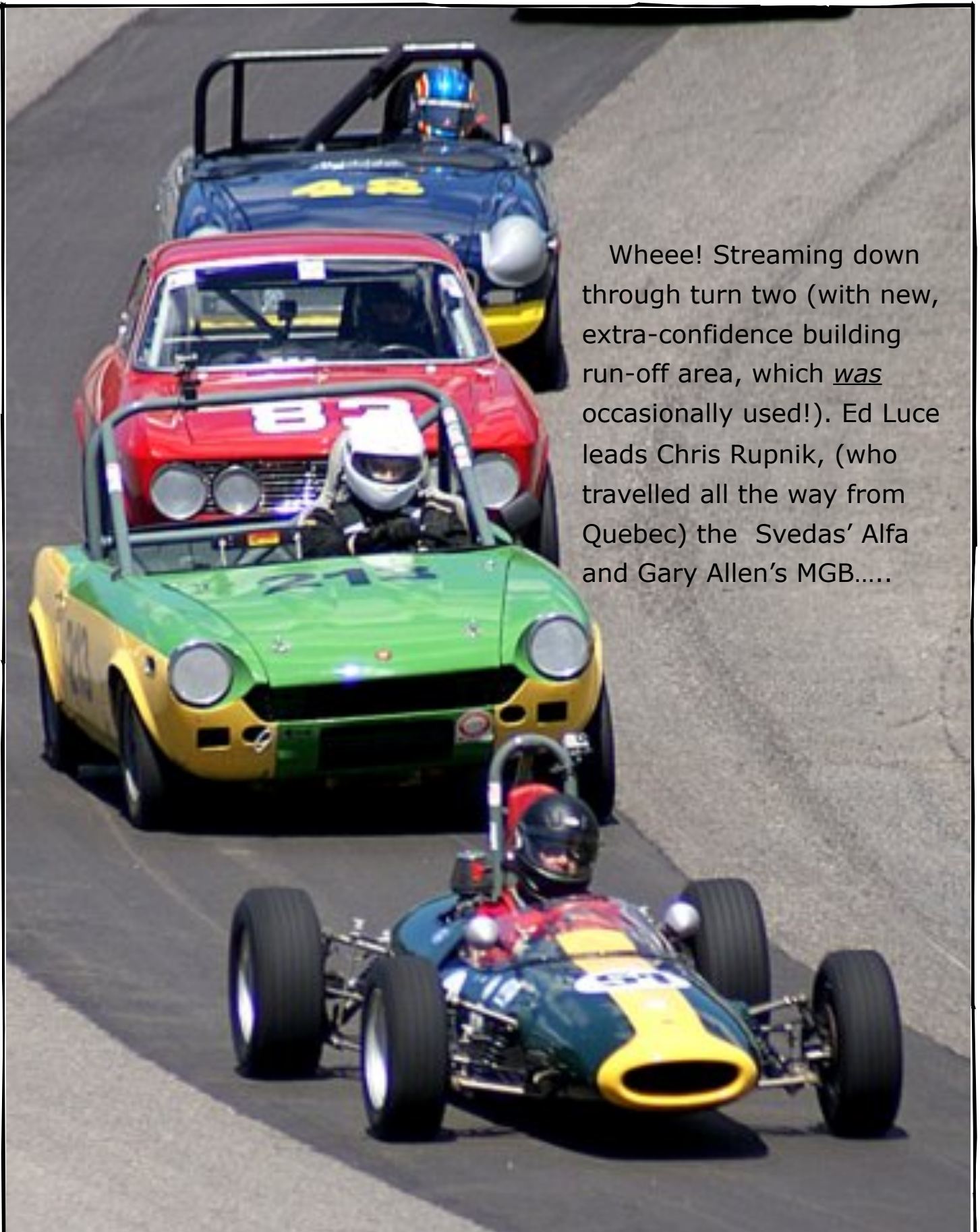


Richard Navin: "We enjoyed what was arguably the best weather for a Spring BEMC event in years. There was a smallish but enthusiastic group that participated and I must say the camaraderie and spirit was outstanding. The highlights for me in no particular order: Lino Baggio in his first ever race weekend taking home a trophy in VH6. Chris Rupnick traveling from Quebec and going very well in the 124. Seeing Gary Allen's new MGB for its first event. Watch out VH2, this is a quick car! Watching Del go from last to 5th (I think) in his replacement Corvette in the G70 race. Battling with Joe, Gary and Anthony over the weekend. We have a competitive group. Spending time with many friends not seen since last year. All the BS chucked around in the paddock, many laughs indeed." Richard.



"I thoroughly enjoyed my race on Sunday afternoon. I had a great battle with Vytas Svedas in his dad's GTV. We shared quite a few corners, some at fairly high speeds, and I must say that I felt completely safe with him in these close quarters." *Joe Lightfoot.*

"I had car problems during qualifying which kept me sidelined all weekend, but had a lot of fun sitting at 3 watching you and Vytas. Thanks to both of you; it ended my weekend with a smile!" *Ken Lee.*



Wheee! Streaming down through turn two (with new, extra-confidence building run-off area, which was occasionally used!). Ed Luce leads Chris Rupnik, (who travelled all the way from Quebec) the Svedas' Alfa and Gary Allen's MGB.....





The MGA of Lino Baggio is pursued by Ted Michalos and Julie Wildman in their Bugeye Sprites.....



Above: Howie Freeman in his Merlyn took first place.



Above: Joe Lightfoot,  
MGB  
Right: The Svedas Alfa  
Romeo



## Ed and Dorothy Luce, driver and crew, #54 Lotus 51A



Ed : "The 1967 Lotus type 51A is the very first of the race cars built to meet the then-new 'Formula Ford' specifications. To me, the type 51 bodywork remains representative of one of the most attractive periods in race car design. Following a serious 'shunt' at the 2010 VARAC Festival, the car is currently running with a reproduction frame built with the same materials and the same brazed technology. I do plan on restoring the original frame ("one of these days") though it has already had several tubes replaced. It is always amazing to me that these things hold together as well as they do, considering that I am sure at the time nobody expected a race car to have a useful lifespan of more than a decade. "

"My wife, Dorothy, is my crew chief / tire changer / refueling fire watch / battery lugger / time keeper, etc., etc. She even scheduled her total knee replacement surgeries around the racing season, so she can continue to participate at events through the summer! I should note that having your wife as crew saves on accommodation, as you can share a room!"





## One for the money, two for the show.....



*EDITOR: I happened to notice a rather worse for wear MGB behind John Dodd's shop and on further inquiry I found that Gary Allen had an encounter of the expensive kind at Grattan. JD has since built a new MGB for Gary for 2013.*

"This is the second version of MGB #42, version one was destroyed in the trees at Grattan," said Gary. "A new tub was obtained from Dave Headley, who repaired it and installed the roll cage, it was trucked back by Keith Jewell, who drove the car in the 2011 season. He now drives the #88 MGB. John Dodd went to work stripping the wreck of usable parts and after the new tub came back from the body shop he rebuilt the entire car. It was fast off the trailer and ran with Richard Navin's well-driven #246 MGB until a slipping clutch ended the weekend.

As for Porsche #32, it continues to be developed with help from Downtown Porsche (Mike Gohn) and Response Engineering (Yarko Matkiwsky) while the driver learns the controls!

I started in G70+ with the Porsche 944 and really enjoyed the close racing with that group of cars. When I started to run the MGB as well I noticed more disparity in the V/H field, understandable with the wide gaps in machinery and preparation. V/H also has a slightly less intense atmosphere!" *(Hmmm...tell THAT to the boys and girls...Ed.)*

# Group 70+



Above: Richard Piper. Above right: Del Bruce congratulates James Sutherland on a race well run! Right: Doug Kurtin collects his snazzy BEMC trophy.

Below: John Coome's WSC Cannibal







Above: Doug Kurtin lights it up. Jim Middleton in his Shelby Mustang, right. Below Group 70 ready to rumble...





Above  
Del Bruce, Corvette

Right  
Al Fergusson  
E-Type Jaguar

Below  
Anthony Polito  
Mustang







## TEAM CANADA AT THE FORMULA VEE 50<sup>TH</sup> FESTIVAL

*By Peter Viccary, with son Shane above.*

A person's 50<sup>th</sup> birthday or an institution's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary is a significant event, but for a motorsports category to endure, essentially unchanged, for 50 years is unique. Such is Formula Vee; an American invention, utilizing German running gear, designed around an Italian chassis. FV became an SCCA recognized national class in 1963. Every 5 years since 1983 the American Formula Vee community has gathered for a birthday celebration. This year, the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, was at Roebling Road Raceway, near Savannah, Georgia. My son Shane and I, stalwarts of FV, were determined to participate. Our vehicles of choice would be his "Current SCCA compliant" Protoform P3 and my "Monoposto compliant" Kelly FV.

Shane is a partner of AVR Motorsports. He and his buddy Sam Ashtiani rent F1200s (Ontario's version of FV) to aspiring racecar drivers. I am AVR's patron. Call me Lord Hesketh. Shane is OK with this, because he thinks he is James Hunt. If you don't know what I'm talking about, look it up, or wait for the release of Rush.

We arrived at Roebling Road Raceway at about 3:30 Thursday

afternoon, looking for Mike Jackson and his entourage. Mike is Grand Wazoo of Vintage Drivers Club of America. VDCA (vintage) and SCCA (current) were the sanctioning bodies of the event. Mike drives the Shadowfax, built in 1969 by Harvey Templeton, which featured a mono shock rear suspension, revolutionizing FV construction to this day. The Shadowfax is the only zero roll FV allowed in the Monoposto rules and is the reason that vintage FV is set at cars built before January 1<sup>st</sup>, 1970. Mike is also one fast SOB.

The Formula Vee 50<sup>th</sup> Birthday Festival was open to Current SCCA FVs, Monoposto Rules Compliant F Vees, Formula First (basically FVs with different wheels and tires, disc brakes and 1600cc VW motors) and a class for noncompliant VW powered cars. Forty-four Monoposto, fifty-nine SCCA, five Formula 1<sup>st</sup> and two others, from California, assembled at the track. The California cars, which would have been more appropriate in the SCCA group, were added to Monoposto, much to Mikes Jackson and Ennis' chagrin. The vintage race group totaled forty-six. The Formula 1sts would stand-alone. SCCA Vees would be split into even and odd numbers for practice, qualifying and heat races. The top twenty from each heat would compete for the Brundage Cup.

Roebling Road is 3.23kms long, 2.02 miles in American. I can best describe it as a two-dimensional roller coaster. The start/finish is at the middle of a straight about a kilometer long. Turn one is a decreasing radius right hand turn with just a touch on the brakes. This leads into a series of seven sweeping left and right hand turns with very little straight in between. Brakes in turn one (some vintage drivers claimed not to be



braking there) and turn four, lift occasionally (depending on how brave



or talented you are), fourth gear all the way. Flat out from the exit of turn six all the way to turn one, this is about as fast as a FV can go, about 115-120mph, 184-192kph in Canadian. Very little elevation change. Lots of drafting opportunities. A true momentum track, perfect for FV.



I qualified an unremarkable 36<sup>th</sup>, 9.6 seconds behind pole sitter Mike Jackson. I was looking forward to improving during the race, however. Starting beside me was Charlie Wilson.

Charlie came to Mosport with Mike in 2005, driving Sandy's Beach. It was my second race and first at Mosport. Charlie helped me a lot. Charlie is a good driver, and his motor was quicker than mine; but he was driving a Formcar (the original production FV) for goodness sake. A brand new restoration, though. I figured I could be at least as fast as Charlie and he would help me pick up a few places along the way.

Things started out according to plan. Charlie sailed by me at the start; I followed him past the next car into turn one. The race settled down into an accordion of racecars battling for the tail of the pack. I kept Charlie in sight and prepared to make a passing attempt on a Lynx, which was between us. Starting lap eight, as we rocketed down the main straight, I checked my mirrors for the Autodynamics, which was chasing me. He showed me his nose to my right. I looked ahead to see if I could make a pass on the Lynx, which wasn't particularly quick through that turn, braked, got back on the power and turned in. Suddenly there was a loud BANG, my car felt like it had exploded, and I saw the underside of a white car as it sailed through the air from my right to left. OMG, that's Mike; where the hell did he come from? I lost him out my peripheral vision as my attention turned to my Kelly. The front right wheel was broken, maybe some suspension damage. I pulled off the track driver's right and got out of the car. The car behind me slid into a gravel trap at the outside of turn one and remained. Mike was nowhere to be seen. A marshal rather nonchalantly walked up and asked if I was OK. "Yes, but where did the white car go?" "Oh, he must have gone on." Thank goodness, I thought for a second. But no way, he didn't go on after that low level flight.

Now, Roebling Road is a very old race track, and one of the beauties about it is that it hasn't really kept up with the times. There is very little guardrail and a few tire walls. Instead, there are dirt berms around most of the track. The track went under full course caution and I ran across the track with three marshals to look for what might be left of Mike. The dirt was six or seven feet high and as I climbed over the top, there was Mike, scrambling out of the Shadowfax, eyes as big as saucers. Thank goodness he's alive, and apparently mostly uninjured. The car had landed in a bed of saplings and bramble and bush just over the top of the hill and just stopped. "Sorry 'bout your car, man" Mike said to me. "I think it's OK. Sorry 'bout yours". Mike was comfortably leading the race and was starting to lap the tail end group, myself included. He dove for a hole that closed before he got all the way through. The race was restarted in time for a one lap dash to the flag and was won by former SCCA national champion Steve Oseth in a Zink. Mike Ennis was second. Charlie was 30<sup>th</sup>.

Still friends! Mike Jackson and I in front of Sandy Beach, below.



Mike and I got back to the paddock via different routes; he in an ambulance, me in a flat bed with the Kelly on the back. I saw Mike almost right away and was relieved to discover he had only a stiff neck and a toenail which he was probably going to lose. "But I think the Shadowfax is totaled." Neither of us blamed the other, so I left him because Shane's heat race was up next.

Shane's number is 27 and he qualified 14<sup>th</sup> in the odd group. That's odd numbers, not cars, or drivers. I missed the start of his heat, but he finished 14<sup>th</sup>, just ahead of Al Spadin in another Protoform. The heat finish put Shane on row 14 for the prestigious Brundage Cup. He finished 22<sup>nd</sup>, 0.96 seconds ahead of Al, but there was a car between them. Shane finished second in a pack from 21<sup>st</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> who were covered by 4.5 seconds. Pretty exciting stuff. Former national champion Brad Stout drafted past former national champion Roger Siebenaler coming out of the last turn to win the race by 0.039 seconds.





Above: Shane passes inside.  
 Right: Shane and Al Spadin  
 finished in a near dead heat at  
 Mosport a couple of years ago.



Shane and I were Team Canada for the weekend, ably assisted by F1200 driver Frank O'Hanlan, who drove down from Ottawa with his girlfriend Beverly to spectate. I hung two big Canadian flags from our paddock canopies. We were quite the celebrities. The Kelly, too. People were constantly coming around to ask what the Kelly was, some taking pictures and to say how good it looked on the track. People were genuinely interested in how we were enjoying the event and thanked us for being there. The highlight may have been Sunday afternoon, when SCCA president Jeff Dahnert came by specifically to talk to us and thank us for our participation.

We were packing up and ready to go by 4pm Sunday afternoon. Through the border no problem, there was no one at the Canadian Customs at Fort Erie. We thought we were in the wrong place. Up to Barrie, unload, home to Markham. Would I do it again? Maybe not tomorrow, but in five years, you bet. The memories are priceless.



*"If I had a hammer..."*

"Glorious, warm sunshine all weekend long. The new bits of tarmac offered more grip, while the paved runoff areas made us a bit more brave. I am always a bit apprehensive on the season opener, but after a few laps..... it was wonderful to be back in a race car, and wonderful to see VARAC friends."

*Andrew Celovsky.*

LEFT: Geoff McCord found this nice shot of Andrew using sophisticated BFH repair technique.....

## FOR SALE 1965 MG Midget - #89 "Gidget"

This car has been raced continuously since 2002 and has been meticulously race prepped to the highest standards over a period of years. Strictly maintained to VARAC eligibility rules.

The car is very quick. Best time at Mosport 1:40.9. Best time at Mont Tremblant 1:59.8. Has won numerous best in class & races in both the wet and dry over cars of superior horsepower. Holds its own with its arch nemesis Minis. Won the all MG race at the Festival in 2010. Presented with the Tony Simms award 2011.

Engine and transmission managed by John Dodd, BMC expert extraordinaire.

1275 cc +.060. Close ratio gearbox. Very safe roll cage. Huffaker windscreen. Dunlop tires (Formula Ford fronts). Includes a set (+ one spare) of Michelin Formula BMW rain tires that provide excellent traction and control in the wet. Tonneau cover. Fuel cell. Fire suppression system. 3.9 locked diff.

Double kill switch. Auxiliary starting system. Odyssey dry cell lightweight battery. Adjustable brake bias. Handy clutch bleed system. Deep sump.

Some larger spares/ancillary equipment sold separately.

Contact Nick Pratt:

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705-742-5994

Serious inquiries only please.

