



VICTORIA

NEWSLETTER



J. LEMAN-BATES



J. LEMAN-BATES

OFFICE BEARERS 1986

| | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|----------|
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| COMMITTEEMEN: | ROY HENDERSON, 10 Darren Road, Springvale, Vic. IAN BLACKWELL, 301 Moorabool Street, Geelong, Vic. | 798 2619 |

DATES FOR 1986

| | | | |
|----------|---------------------------------|--------|------------------------------------|
| JAN 17 | Informal Meeting | JUL 7 | Committee Meeting |
| 26 | Cavalcade of Transport Rally | 25 | Film Night (note: 4th Friday) |
| FEB 3 | Committee Meeting | AUG 4 | Committee Meeting |
| 21 | Annual General Meeting | 15 | Auction Night |
| MAR 3 | Committee Meeting | SEPT 1 | Committee Meeting |
| 16 | Kalorama Rally | 19 | General Meeting |
| 21 | General Meeting | 28 | Economy Run |
| 23 | Picnic Rally - Day Run | OCT 6 | Committee Meeting |
| APL 7 | Committee Meeting | 17 | General Meeting and Election Night |
| 18 | General Meeting and Video Films | NOV 10 | Committee Meeting (note: 2nd Mon) |
| 25/26/27 | Halley's Rally - Wangaratta | 21 | General Meeting |
| MAY 5 | Committee Meeting | 30 | Christmas Barbeque |
| 16 | General Meeting | DEC 1 | Committee Meeting |
| 18 | Day Rally - with Riley Car Club | | |
| JUN 2 | Committee Meeting | | |
| 20 | General Meeting and Video Night | | |

NOTE that all these dates are the intended dates of events - it is quite possible that we will have extra events for 1986.

SUPPER ROSTER FOR 1986

| | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|
| January : John Twomey | February : Horrie Morgan | March : Richard Creed |
| April : David Caldwell | May : John Stewart | June : Ron Wilson |
| July : Austin Tope | August : David Wischer | September : Bob Graham |
| October : Roy Henderson | November : Geoff Hood | |

PLEASE NOTE : Should you not be able to arrange supper on your rostered night, would you please contact the Club Captain, Richard Creed on 716 2193.

EDITORIAL

Our regular contributors continue to submit articles for your newsletter. I must thank them - also we have received another series of articles from the Land of the Long White Cloud (New Zealand). These articles will appear over the next few issues. The final episode on the tuning of a 12/50 engine will be in this issue. Eric Cunningham's articles on the now topical Tripoli Grand Prix continue with an account of the 1937 event by Richard Seaman.

I do have several other articles including an interesting supplement to "Froth and Bubble" by Horrie Morgan - these will appear in the July issue.

RICHARD

EVENTS

I made reference to the Anzac Rally in my editorial in the May newsletter and, as yet, nobody has sent a detailed report on this most successful event.

Future events to make SPECIAL note of :

1987 SOUTH AUSTRALIAN RALLY : by Richard Creed

As mentioned briefly in the last newsletter, this event will be held from March 30th to April 5th, 1987.

As agreed at the last Club meeting, I will be organising an extra Rally from Melbourne to the start of the SA Rally.

The start of the SA Rally will be at lunch time in Murray Bridge, then travel to the Barossa Valley for 4 nights' stay.

It is my intention to hold a Rally from Melbourne to Murray Bridge.

START : Saturday, 28th March, 1987 Melbourne.

There will be two overnight stays - venues to be advised in the near future (these depend on the number of starters).

ROUTE : I have tentatively arranged two different routes and the final course will be decided on, depending on the numbers involved in the party.

SPECIAL NOTE : Those intending to go to the SA Rally, would you please advise me NOW, as I will handle bulk bookings with the SA Club. To save the hassles, this will be included in your Rally to Murray Bridge.

PLEASE RING ME RE SA RALLY : Richard Creed on (03) 716 2193. This is URGENT!! We must have numbers by 30th June to advance book accommodation in the Barossa Valley at that time of year.

The tentative programme is as follows :

Entrants to meet and assemble at 12,30 pm at Murray Bridge for lunch.

MONDAY, MARCH 30 : Lunch at Murray Bridge then travel to and stay 4 nights in the Barossa at Nuriootpa.
Dinner at Nuriootpa.

TUESDAY, MARCH 31 : Free day OR a "You're-for-it" trip.
Mid afternoon - gather suitably dressed (ties and jackets please) to go by a bus to Adelaide to the Casino for dinner then return later.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 1 : A "You're-for-it" day tour
Dinner at the Dorian Restaurant

THURSDAY, APRIL 2 : A "You're-for-it" day tour
Dinner at Nuriootpa

FRIDAY, APRIL 3 : Travel to Renmark to stay 2 nights
Lunch at Walkerie
Dinner at the Renmark Country Club

SATURDAY, APRIL 4 : A tour around the town
Dinner in Renmark

SUNDAY, APRIL 5 : Entrants leave to travel home.

MORE ON EVENTS

1987 PRESENTATION AND ANNUAL DINNER

DATE Saturday, 11th October
 VENUE Clayton RSL Club
 PRICE \$21.50 per head. Bar Service
 ENTRY Contact : John Stewart, 17 Fromer Street,
 Moorabbin. 557 3936

This is ADVANCE WARNING - we really require this to be a success.

Ring John and BOOK NOW !!!

LIBRARY

Alister Cannon is still seeking books or technical articles for the Library. Please assist in this project as we wish to improve your Library.

EDITOR'S NOTE : Alister has kindly loaned to the Editor a large number of interesting articles/advertisements concerning Alvis for inclusion in newsletters, etc. Any other such articles would be appreciated.

TUNING THE 12/50 AND 12/60 ALVIS The Final Lesson now Begineth.

Gear Ratios : All T Series cars except the later TK and the TL models, have the following gear ratios : 4.77, 7.32, 11.04 and 18.54 to 1, giving at 4,000 rpm the following speeds : 76.8, 50.1, 33.3 and 19.8 mph; let me say here that the standard 12/50 will NOT produce 4,000 rpm in top gear except in very favourable circumstances. These speeds are calculated on the dimensions of new Dunlop racing covers; I am well aware that they do not agree with those given in the 12/50 instruction book, but you can check them if you like. These ratios are much too wide for comfort and the SD cars were fitted with higher 1st and 2nd gears, which produced the following ratios : 4.33, 6.64, 9.22 and 14.05 (84.7, 55.2, 39.8 and 26.1 mph at 4,000 rpm), later of course, changed to 4.55, 6.98, 9.69 and 14.77 (80.6, 52.6, 37.9 and 24.9 mph). This is better, but third is still a long way from top, so nearly all the TK 12/60's and all the TL 12/60's, were fitted with not only the high 1st and 2nd gears but also a higher third; this results in ratios for these models as follows : 4.77, 6.73, 10.17 and 15.49 (76.8, 54.5, 36.1 and 23.7 mph). These gears which are the closest fitted as standard to 12/50's, were first used in the 1930 sports "Silver Eagle" models and can be fitted to any 12/50. Note, however that the whole set must be obtained, for reverse gear is also different (meshing as it does with 1st and 3rd) and so is the upper constant mesh pinion, which is cut away in accordance with the requirements of the altered third gear wheel.

A better, but more expensive, plan is to obtain (or keep) the 1st, 2nd, 3rd and reverse gears of an SD type box and to have made special constant mesh gears with 19 and 30 teeth, respectively, in place of the standard Alvis constants, which have 17 and 32 teeth. This results (supposing, say, a 4.55 axle) in ratios of : 4.55, 5.86, 8.13 and 12.39 (80.6, 62.7, 45.2 and 29.6 mph). Remember that these speeds are all calculated at 4,000 rpm and are therefore not (necessarily) maxima. Special constants of this type were used by the Alvis Co. when they raced the four-cylinder FWD cars in the 1928 TT (the gears from which, however, do NOT fit 12/50's) and since then, inter alia, by Michael May, noted Alvis death-dicer, etc., to whom I am indebted for the idea.

This gear ratio problem was made considerably more complicated by the fact that the tooth form was changed and not on all the gears at once, but in two steps. Thus, all TE, TF and SD motors made up to mid-1927 have shallow "stud-tooth" gears throughout (first fitted case-hardened, incidentally, at chassis number 4427). All TF and SD motors made from then till near the end of 1927 have "stub-tooth" 1st and 2nd gears, but "deep-tooth" 3rd and constants, while the last few TF, all the TG and TH, those SD made after that date, and all TJ, TK and TL motors have "deep-tooth" gears throughout. Also, numbers of the earlier cars have been converted! Note, by the way, that each of these alterations, whether to tooth contour or ratio,

TUNING THE 12/50 AND 12/60 ALVIS (continued)

affects the sliding reverse gear, as this meshes with 1st and 3rd, so that there are no fewer than seven different 12/50 reverse pinions in existence.

All those boxes with either high 1st and 2nd or high 1st, 2nd and 3rd gears, i.e. those out of SD, TK, TL and the sports "Silver Eagle" models, have an "S" stamped on the lid in addition to the box number. Of course, the gears may have been changed

CHASSIS : Essential points of the brake gear remained unchanged during 12/50 production, though the linkage was altered slightly on two occasions : 1926 and 1931. The only noticeable difference here is that in the revival batch (1931-2) the hand brake operates on all four wheels, as against the previous system of operation on the rear wheels only.

The hubs were unchanged until 1932, when the TL 12/60 was introduced with the Dunlop knock-off hubs, using corrugated driving plates. A variety of wheels will be found, all those used with low pressure tyres, however, being of 20 inch dia., except those wire wheels fitted to the early SD models, which were of 21 inch dia and possessed a peculiar and dastardly form of split rim. Low pressure tyre sizes were at first 4.50" x 21", then 4.75" or 4.95" x 20", and later 5.00" x 20", which latter size is convenient. Oversize tyres may interfere with standard wings.

Those cars built roughly before April 1928 were fitted with a steering box of Alvis manufacture; those after, with Marles units; the latter are lighter in operation but also lower geared (1½ turns lock-to-lock against 1 and 1/8th).— Any wheel wobble can usually be cured by attending to the drag link ball joints; this means packing up or replacing the small but very strong spring used in these joints, and possibly replacing the lignum vitae inserts. If the inner insert at either end is damaged it can easily be drilled out and a new one lightly tapped in. The track rod ball joints rarely give trouble; if wheel wobble still persists and the wheel alignment is correct, wedges between the axle and the springs if not already fitted, usually effect a cure.

The front springs are all interchangeable, though improved in 1926 by the extension of the second leaf to roll round the spring eye. The rear springs are also interchangeable, but vary in initial curvature according to the year and the type of body fitted; however, all the sports two-seaters have identical rear springs.

All 12/50's have double Hartford shock-absorbers front and rear, the latter mounted transversely. The 12/50 radiator was deepened somewhat in 1928; in the opinion of many this spoilt the frontal aspect, but in any case it was only a minor alteration. The 1931-2 cars have an entirely different radiator block with a separate, chromium plated, shell.

The touring motors have had a startling range of bodies which I am not going to attempt to review; the sports two-seaters, until the end of 1926, were the well known boat-shaped duck's-well, "duck's backed" body, usually of polished aluminium. The 1927 version was beetle-backed, still aluminium panelled, but usually painted; in 1928 the same body, but panelled in sheet metal, while in 1929 the hood was concealed beneath a miniature tonneau cover. In 1931-2, running boards were dispensed with, bucket seats were used, and the disappearing hood was neatly concealed by panelling; this body was rather deeper, and also heavier, than the earlier versions. All these two-seater bodies were built by Carbodies Ltd., whose factory is practically opposite that of Alvis Ltd.

I hope these remarks will be of interest to some of those who read them; I have intentionally made no mention of radical alterations such as lowering or shortening chassis frames, or hotting-up engines to the point where they are no longer suitable for roadwork, because such doughty deeds must of necessity be to a great extent individual, and any attempt to reduce them to a formula is doomed to failure.

(If anyone would like further details, or part numbers, I shall be pleased to help them to the best of my ability. ED.)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Richard and family,

Your names have appeared in print many times since we last saw you at Rotorua in 1980. Our family of twin sons who are now near 5½ years of age have made sure that Dad keeps the Alvis name to the fore, both in the garage and on the road at rallies or just a trip down the road - keen passengers. They have a 12/50 each if they do the rebuild!! We will see what happens. There is plenty of interest to date.

However, the main reason for writing is the enclosed articles, which will break the lack of correspondence from New Zealand. The articles are varied and the article on Alvis 10/30 to 12/60 is in reply to Eric's article on the side valve cars with a bit of extra added for the historian. The other two (2) articles are of general interest. All three (3) have been sent to the 12/50 Register and Alvis Car Club of New Zealand. As I do not have an address for the Sydney Alvis Club, I cannot send them a copy. Would you be able to assist me in this area please.

Please make sure that Ron Wilson keeps the HARE on the piano as I had heard about the handing over ceremony and Ron Blanchett has a photograph of this said hare!! Excellent work by all concerned.

All the very best and good motoring.

MICHAEL CURRY

(3 Alleyne Court, Brown Owl, Upper Hutt, New Zealand)

ALVIS 10/30 TO 12/60 CARS IN NEW ZEALAND

In recent copies of the monthly newsletter (Alvis Car Club of Victoria) there have appeared a number of articles on vintage Alvis cars and their whereabouts today. These articles have been very interesting and I note that one of the mistakes that appears in Hull & Johnson "The Vintage Alvis" on page 310 quotes (in part) :

"The cars were shipped principally to Sydney, Adelaide and Melbourne.
AGENTS TOZER, KEMSLEY AND MILLBOURNE LTD., LONDON."

Somewhere New Zealand took delivery of a number of these exported cars listed on page 310 of Hull & Johnson. The current known complete cars in New Zealand are :

| MODEL | CAR NO. | ENGINE | CHASSIS | |
|-------|---------|--------|---------|-----------------------|
| 10/30 | ? | 1706 | 1409 | T. Ails |
| 12/40 | 7459 | 2520 | 2168 | R. Blanchett |
| 12/40 | 7630 | 2666 | 2316 | L. Newton |
| 12/40 | ? | 3082 | 2735 | L. Newton |
| 12/50 | 8621 | 3699 | 3307 | R. Blanchett |
| 12/50 | ? | 3707 | 3638 | A. McIntosh |
| 12/50 | ? | 4310 | 2938 | M. MacMillian |
| 12/50 | 9358 | 4368 | 4011 | M. Curry |
| 12/50 | 9394 | ? | ? | M. Ferrer |
| 12/50 | ? | 4984 | 4625 | P. Ferris |
| 12/50 | 10043 | 5074 | 4721 | M. Curry |
| 12/50 | 11387 | 6939 | 6592 | A. Dray |
| 12/50 | 11602 | 7055 | 6759 | D. Batterton |
| 12/50 | 12294 | 9604 | 7403 | C. Warren |
| 12/50 | 14223 | 9884 | 9367 | G. Tofield |
| 12/60 | 14369 | 9451 | ? | G. Tofield |
| 12/50 | ? | ? | ?(NZ) | exported to Australia |

Of the cars listed, four are under restoration, the remainder have been used on the road in the last four to five years. There are a number of other parts which exist and I have detailed below what information I currently have on hand :

| MODEL | CAR NO. | ENGINE | CHASSIS | |
|----------|---------|--------|---------|----------------------|
| TD 12/40 | 8671 | - | - | Wrecked |
| - | - | 2538 | - | Engine only |
| TE 12/50 | - | 4238 | - | Engine only |
| TE 12/50 | 9063 | 4073 | 3723 | Wrecked |
| - | - | 4323 | - | Engine only |
| - | - | 4479 | 4132 | Handbook only exists |
| - | - | 4897 | - | Engine only |
| - | 9894 | - | 4690 | ? ? |
| TE 12/50 | - | - | 3092 | Diff only remains |
| SC 12/50 | 8879 | - | - | Wrecked |
| - | - | 4016 | - | Engine only |

ALVIS 10/30 TO 12/60 CARS IN NEW ZEALAND (continued)

| <u>MODEL</u> | <u>CAR NO.</u> | <u>ENGINE</u> | <u>CHASSIS</u> | |
|--------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|---------------------------------------|
| TE 12/50 | - | 4323 | - | Most parts known |
| TG 12/50 | - | 5178 | - | Minor engine parts (recent UK import) |
| 12/50 | - | - | - | In South Island |
| 12/50 | - | - | - | Parts being assembled |

From the above currently known to exist in New Zealand as cars imported new up to 1930 are :

10/30 1 with another possible
 12/40 4 (minimum)
 12/50 23 (minimum)

There are also 5 (minimum) cars that have been imported second hand since 1922 (from UK and Australia). This makes 32 possible vintage 10/30, 12/40, 12/50 and 12/60 Alvises in New Zealand.

There are also known : 14.76 HP 1 only
 16.95 HP 3 only

The NZ agents were A.V. ANDERSON, CHRISTCHURCH and H.S. HARMAN, WANGANUI.

This list is far from complete but it may assist the historians and bring up to date what is known about the numbers of cars in New Zealand.

It is very interesting to note that we do not have a FWD, which is a pity as this would mean that NZ would have a near complete range of the vintage types. It has always been a desire of mine to own one.

I would be interested to know if the book that was being talked about has been, or is being, or about to be written? The above may help?? Please advise through the newsletters etc.

Car TE 12/50 9063 I understand was the 1st TE exported and Rob Gunnell's TE Smokey was the second - it is car no. 9065.

Car no. TG 10043 was imported to NZ when it was two years old ex UK. I believe that the three cars before it were TH 12/50 and were exported to Australia - Brisbane.

M. A. CURRY, Upper Hutt, New Zealand, 8 May, 1986.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR (continued)

Dear Richard,

I was amused to read the letter from RG in the April Newsletter concerning the description of his TB 14. Amused I was, until I became saddened. Sad that a man of words (so many words) should make so many errors in one letter. The letter is riddled with spelling mistakes and the use of inappropriate words which sound like the intended word (malapropisms). There is also evidence of dyslexia and stunted cryptography. Very sad, but one must be charitable and try to help, so I have endeavoured to untangle his meaning.

"Greaseful" is surely what was meant and I think by "esoteric" he meant "enteric", for there is something positively intestinal about the length and shape of a TB 14. "Derisible" is simply spelt incorrectly, but where "refined" is used I think reformed or even deformed was intended. "Wellformed"? Formed in a well? Quite likely ... certainly not elegant; surely Elephant was intended, because elephantine would seem apt to most of us. Everyone knows that it is irritating, not invigorating to be in close prolonged contact with a pachyderm and that such beasts have a strong odour. Plenty of o but very little splen. Prolonged contact with a TB 14 can harm the senses - the 'c' must be a typographical error. The senses of those familiar with the TB 21 are offended by the short bonnet of the TB 14 - I suppose it could be described as a 'bonny'. 'Special' had me guessing for a while until I realised that it is an anagram of 'le Spica' which is French for 'that which is immobile'. 'Handsome' is another anagram - for Moshe Dan, who was magnificent in his leadership of the lost tribe of the Exquis-ites out of the wilderness.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR (continued)

Good grief, don't tell me there are 40,000 TB 14's out there in the bush somewhere. That would be purely pandemonious!

JOHN HETHERINGTON

EDITORIAL COMMENT - at last somebody has more words than R.G.

ED

"THE SIR WALTER RALLY" : Sunday, 18 May, 1986

Six entrants from this Club and three from The Riley Motor Club started the Rally in good but windy weather.

All was set for a good Rally with the finish at The Upper Yarra Dam, but about half way along the organisation broke down.

My failure to check the typed route instructions with my scribbled notes taken while doing the survey a week earlier led to a wrong map reference being shown. By a weird co-incidence the real map reference should have shown the Coldstream Airport while the wrong one showed the Berwick Airport.

Most, after much argument with their navigators recognised the error and jumped instructions and arrived late at the finish. But, as time taken was part of the Rally, we cannot have any results and the Rally must be termed a 'Non Event'.

My sincere apologies to both Clubs and more particularly the entrants. But, thanks to all who came along and took the error with good humour.

RON WILSON

KALORAMA

The date of the next Kalorama Rally is 15th March, 1987.

A donation of \$500 has been made to the Yarra-Me Resident's Association, following the 1986 event.

R.G.

CARS AND PARTS FOR SALE/SWAP/WANTED

- FOR SALE Alvis 4.3 litre Martin & King saloon. Very original car. Being sold with great regret. A very practical car for normal domestic use Full history. Genuine reason for sale.
- FOR SALE Talbot 14/45 1928 replica 90 body. Requires only cosmetic work to complete. Also for sale with regret.
BILL BARBER (059) 68 4215
- SWAP One off-side (RH) brake pulley and casting in excellent condition for one near-side pulley and casting in similar condition for 12/50 front brake axle.
FRANK CORBETT PO Box 218, Kenmore, 4069. Phone : (07) 378 7280
- FOR SALE Riley RME sedan 1½ litre 1954, as seen at '85 Lake Boga Rally. Hide interior. A nice original car.
- WANTED 3 litre parts wanted - 1 castellated nut for back axle. 1" diameter, 20 threads per inch. Also front bumper left section.
- WANTED 3 litre water pump!! Wanted known!! The water pump kit from Holden or whatever which can be adapted. Now come on, fellas. I have been subscribing to this newsletter for years and need help with my water works. Call, phone or write.
COL WINSLADE, PO Lake Boga, 3584. Telephone : (050) 372 244
- WANTED 3 litre drophead, preferably Grey Lady TC 21/100 - any condition. DEAN PRANGLEY, (07) 277 6211 or (07) 378 6893 OR write 28 Blackstone St, Indooroopilly, Qld. 4068.
- WANTED Radiator badge of the "AVRO" design to assist in the restoration of a 12/40 Alvis in England. Please contact Eric Cunningham, 8 Moreil St, Campbelltown, NSW 2560. Phone : (046) 25 1381.

SPARES REPORT : VINTAGE SPARES

12/50 foot plates, cast in three pieces and welded to keep price down. Sub frame type - \$140
 12/50 top and bottom water outlets - \$32 pair
 Silver Eagle water pump casting - \$80 not machined
 Silver Eagle top water outlet - \$16.00
 ALVIS CAR CLUB badges - \$30 each (not original radiator badges)
 Magneto coupling casting - price T.B.A.
 TA 14 top thermostat housing - price T.B.A.
 12/50 clutch plates - \$70.50 each
 12/50 front brake cables - \$42.00 each
 12/50 oil strainer - \$7.00 each
 12/50 head gaskets - \$26.00 each
 SP 20 head gaskets - \$35.00 each

NOTE : 12/50 half shafts nearly finished.
 P.V.T. half shafts started - will be finished in the near future.

GEOFF HOOD
AUSTIN TOPE

THE SIR WALTER RALLY (which was really a half day Trial)CONTESTANTS :

| <u>ALVIS CLUB</u> | | <u>RILEY CLUB</u> | |
|--------------------------|----------|------------------------|----------------|
| Austin and Margaret Tope | Speed 20 | Glen, Judith and | |
| Robert Graham | TB 14 | David Bishop | Riley 2½ Litre |
| Keith and Merrill Welsh | MG TC | Tony and Heather Cross | Modern |
| David and Moira Wischer | Mercedes | | |
| Alister Cannon and | SAAB | | |
| David Caldwell | Ford | | |
| Roy Henderson | Ford | | |

The start - Forest Hill carpark, 9.30 am, Sunday.

The contestants - raring to go!

The questionnaire - easy to understand, except for the hard bits! Such as a rather odd instruction by map references to proceed from Warrandyte to Lilydale via Berwick in allowed time of about 15 minutes.

R.W. apologised later for the boo-boo amid howls of laughter.

There were lots of TL's and TR's and weird questions like "what business is Huckleberry's brother in?" (a trout farm) and "Did you know that "Smithy" was involved in motorcar manufacturing at one time?" Something to do with one-piece chassis and body units in laminated timber. R.W. informed us that around nine were made, of which only one now remains - where is it? Ask R.W.

On reading through the questionnaire, I realised the trial would be a soda, so to give the other contestants some sort of show, I proceeded to lose myself 1.4 km from the start. Extricating myself 13 minutes later (lucky my beloved Jo' wasn't there), I set off again, passing Team Welsh on the way. As they were parked off the road at the time, I thought I might offer aid, but on slowing down, was appalled by the vile language emanating from the TC as Merrill belaboured Keith with his own maps and compass and this only 1.5 km from the start. I still can't figure how the Claret Kid was able to squeeze all bar one foot under the dashboard of the TC.

How beautiful is our North East Hill country at this time of year, golden autumn tones : green, green hills; pastures so rich the stock can barely waddle and those lovely village centres, still largely untouched by the aluminium and glass syndrome. Definitely our rally director was inspired to pick such a delightful route.

BUT!! Try driving one-handed around those treacherous little blind dips and bends, while keeping one eye on the road, the other on a conglomeration of Melways, 222 Broadbents, Q sheets and clipboards, not to mention clocks and speedometers AND still try and take in the scenery, especially the one in halter and shorts busily mowing her lawn.

THE SIR WALTER RALLY (continued)

Of course, the old white whale would ask "What's the hassle?" But then, anyone who is used to "Zetetic" trials would find this one reasonable to say the least.

The route taken led us through Chirnside Park, Yering, Coldstream, Gruyere, Seville, Yellingbo, Woori-Yallock and Warburton, to the finish at the Upper Yarra Reservoir, one which I could recommend to anyone for a quiet Sunday drive.

During my travels, I spotted the Topes heading in the wrong direction, so joined forces with them for the remainder of the trip, and with the blind leading the blind, managed to temporarily lose us all up a dirt track.

However, after this and many other adventures, such as violent deceleration from 120 kph to 60 kph (and back to 120 kph after the law had passed), we finally arrived at the Reservoir for lunch and post mortem, to find the barbeques lit and RW waiting for us.

Talking of road-holding (which I wasn't), following the Tope "Speed" through some rather quick bends around Warburton with my radials squealing protests, I was amazed to see it apparently running on rails, as flat as a tack and this with only around 2½ square inches of rubber on the road - not bad at all!

It doesn't pay to be too smart! Seems Alister and David (AC-DC?) read too much into one Q, which instructed them to go through the "big town" - Warburton - TR and cross Irishman's Creek. They checked the map and saw Big Pat's Creek. "Aha!" they said. "He was obviously Irish", and took off up around the back of Mount Bride, necessitating final approach to the finish by parachute.

However, all's well, etc. We had all arrived safely. All, that is, except Tony and Heather Gross, who must have entered the Bermuda Triangle, for they left Forest Hill on time, drove off into the dawn and were never seen again, at least not on Sunday.

A couple of highlights : Glen Bishop's number plate RILEY-4.

Great to see Keith out and around so soon after his operation. He's definitely getting better - Merrill couldn't get a word in edge-wise.

Some of the male competitors being driven to the toilet block by chauffeuse Moira in the Wischer Mercedes. Nice work, if you can get it!

Many thanks, Ron, for an excellent day - thoroughly enjoyed by all.

R.H.

LAKE BOGA MYSTERY REPORTER

Twas nice to read of Bob Graham having a trip to Robe. I hope he brought back some crayfish for our Editor.

CW

FOR SALE : A vintage car and part sale is planned for Saturday, September 6th, 1986 commencing at 9.30 am at Misery Farm, Lake Boga. Come with M.T. trailers and go home FULL.

36 Ford V8 buggy, very fast, has been timed at speeds in excess of a half an hour in twenty minutes. p.o.a.

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May 28th, 1937.

The Autocar

1029

Cornering at 180 m.p.h.!

Experiences at Tripoli in His First Race for Mercedes-Benz

by

RICHARD SEAMAN

THE Race of the Millions," or, in plainer language, the Grand Prix of Tripoli, is, I think, the most colourful and brilliant race in the world. Although it has taken place annually since 1927, until five years ago it was only a rather insignificant little race "somewhere in Africa," and nobody took much notice of it. But in 1933, just after Marshal Balbo had become Governor of Libya, a certain dentist came to him one day with the very simple but ingenious idea of running a State lottery in connection with the race. Balbo carried out this idea with all his great energy and initiative, so that the "Loteria di Tripoli" is now an immense national sweepstake, providing, with many other awards, £60,000 to the winner, considerable prize money for the race, and a very lucrative source of revenue for the Libyan Government. About four million lottery tickets are sold all over Italy at twelve lire (about half a crown) each, so it can be imagined with what excitement the Italian public follows the race.

And the setting is certainly worthy of the occasion, for Balbo has made the circuit probably the finest, and certainly the fastest, road circuit in the world, and provided it with a magnificent concrete grandstand, surrounded by lawns and brilliant flowering shrubs. The pits, and the "chronométrage," too, are done on a lavish scale, all in snow-white concrete and all very spick and span. In fact, it is the Ascot of motor racing circuits.

The Mercedes team, in which I was to drive, arrived by boat a week before the race—rather early, but the next boat would have been too late for practice on Thursday. Our racing cars also came by boat, and as one by one they appeared out of the hold to be manoeuvred into line on the quay they were a sight to gladden the heart of any true enthusiast. Five gleaming silver cars, beautifully proportioned, the product of a winter's intensive work by one of the oldest, yet most enterprising, factories in the world.

And every one in the team was certainly out to get the

best from the cars. I think it would have been difficult to find a keener racing team, every one out to do his bit, and no attacks of what "Casque" would describe as "you're another."

We had several days to put in before practice, which we spent in exploring Tripoli and its surroundings. The town itself is a most interesting combination with its Arab quarter and modern Italian civilisation. The hotel where we were staying, for instance, was a model of modern comfort, and we all agreed that it was about the best hotel that one stayed in during the whole of the racing season. It combined also the Casino and a theatre, where there was a revue on for race week.

Needless to say, I lost no time after our arrival in getting out to have a look at the circuit, as I had never seen it before. It proved to be much as I had imagined, colossally fast, yet deriving its speed not from very long straights, for the longest is no more than a kilometre, but rather from its very fast bends and absence of slow corners. There are

several bends, one of which is right in front of the grandstand, which can be taken flat out, i.e., at about 180 m.p.h. There are a number which are of the 100-130 m.p.h. order, and only three for which one must drop below 100 m.p.h., the slowest being taken at about 50 m.p.h.

IN this special article Dick Seaman, who is one of the few Englishmen to have driven for a crack foreign racing team, tells of the fantastically high speeds of modern road racing. He finished seventh in his first race of the season on May 9th at 129 m.p.h.



May 28th, 1937.



CORNERING AT 180 m.p.h.! (CONTINUED)

stead, I spent an instructive afternoon watching the other cars in action on one of the slower bends.

Rosemeyer, Stuck and Caracciola did the three fastest laps, about 7 seconds faster than Varzi's lap record of last year (3 minutes 27 seconds). Nuvolari did 3 minutes 33 seconds, extraordinarily fast considering that his Alfa was much slower than the German cars. He had a specially boosted-up engine, giving about 40 b.h.p. more than the other Alfas, but this appeared to be too much, for it was very unreliable, and there was a rumour that the great Tazio would not start. This proved, however, to be unfounded, and he appeared all right on the line, to the delight of the crowd.

The race started at 3 p.m. on Sunday, and a quarter of an hour before the start the cars and drivers were all on the line, and Marshal Balbo himself, surrounded by officials, was already inspecting the cars and shaking hands with the drivers.

Ten minutes to go! Everything is ready—the cars warmed, the driver and a couple of mechanics waiting beside each, while in the huge grandstand the crowd is strangely quiet, awaiting the start of the race that will change the whole course of so many people's lives. Five minutes to go, and up runs Neubauer, the Mercedes team chief and "doyen" of racing managers, to give me a few hasty last-minute instructions and to wish me "bon voyage." I get in the car and settle in the seat, collecting my thoughts for the start. One and a half minutes is signalled by a prearranged system of lights facing the drivers.

Nuvolari on the Right

When there are only 45 sec. to go a mechanic starts the car with a special electric motor. The mechanics retire and the drivers are left alone in their cars. I pull down my goggles, exchange grins with Nuvolari on my right, and with 10 sec. to go engage first gear. The lights go green and we're away. I get quite a good start, marred after about 100 yards when two cars in front touch hub caps and swerve, so that I have to brake, and behind me Nuvolari in turn only just avoids my tail. Down the straight and through the first bend at about 150 m.p.h., driving practically blind owing to the shower of sand thrown up by the cars in front cutting the corner. This, incidentally, is one of the chief faults of the circuit, for a margin of sand is left along either side of the road for the Arabs to ride their donkeys along under normal conditions.

Gradually the cars string out and for the first few laps I have a private race with Delius, on an Auto-Union, first one and then the other of us leading. I had received instructions to drive as gently as possible on the corners to save the tyres, which I set about doing, though it needed a good deal of restraint.

It was this policy of tyre-saving by Mercedes which



The victorious Mercedes-Benz racing cars being slung aboard at Naples "en route" for the race.

eventually won the race. The Auto-Union went off like bullets and Stuck had already changed tyres by the fifth lap, and continued to do so at frequent intervals. All the Mercedes, however, continued without a change until the fourteenth of the forty laps. Caracciola was by then in the lead, but soon after this he experienced engine trouble, owing to the enormous quantity of sand and stones which was thrown up getting into the engine air intake. In spite of this he continued in second place for several laps, and by the thirtieth lap Lang, myself and Caracciola were lying first, second and third, Brauchitsch having retired.

Just as I was feeling pleasantly optimistic about this state of affairs my own engine developed bad misfiring (later found to be caused by the same trouble as Caracciola's), so that I could only limp round the last few laps, and one by one the Auto-Unions swept by, and I could only finish seventh. Lang, however, had continued his beautifully judged run with no trouble to score a well-

deserved victory at a speed of 134 m.p.h. In view of the number of people who are at present criticising our small artificial circuits in England for making passing so difficult, I was interested to find that with two equally matched cars it can be just as difficult even on a wide, fast course like Tripoli. It is, in my opinion, an unavoidable fault common to all forms of motor racing (including speedway racing), and I think it is wrong to criticise our English circuits too much on this score.

And so, dirty but pleased, we go home to warm baths, leaving the jubilant Mercedes mechanics clearing up the pit, and catching a glimpse of the excited winner of the lottery, who is so overcome that he has to clutch Lang round the neck to support himself as he wrings him incessantly by the hand.

The following day we left again for Germany to get ready for the next race on the Avus track at Berlin, where speeds should be even higher than at Tripoli.

