



Gateway Relay

Vol IV, No. 2

St Louis Sports Car Council

October 2014

Council News & Notes

- While the year may be winding down, the clubs are finishing the season in a large fashion with multiple events, such as the Gateway Z Club's show, the All British Car & Cycle Show and the Jaguar Association of Greater St Louis Concours at the Kemp Museum. As per usual, photos of the activities can be seen at the back end of this issue of the *Relay*.
- As the temperatures continue to drop, the driving activities will necessarily drop off (well, maybe not all of them). However, as indicated at right, several road opportunities remain prior to the onset of the holidays and the club holiday parties.
- Here at StLSCC Central, we'll be returning to our standard Winter format of four pages but, as always, if any club puts together some sort of activity, give us a holler and we'll make plans to put out the word and cover it.
- Otherwise, in the meantime, hopefully everyone continues to take advantage of the last few bursts of warm weather, dry roads and clear skies. Word is we'll all need snow-mobiles in a few months ...



Up & Coming

- 26 Oct 2014—Wurstmart Drive & Church Dinner**, hosted by the MG Club of St Louis and St Louis Triumph Owners Association, open to all sports and special interest car clubs. Meet at the "Red Roof Shell" on the north side of Columbia, IL 3, around 10:30 with a departure shortly afterwards to Renault, IL, and Holy Cross Lutheran Church for food, crafts and a country-style dinner. Questions? Call Rich Berger at (314)608-5195 or Karl Schmitt at (636)797-4203 (cell Sunday morning: 636-208-9783).
- 31 Oct 2014—Scheduled last Outsiders Car Club/Sonic Cruise** for the season, ~4 PM until 10 PM, 1002 S Kirkwood Rd just north of I-44. All makes and models welcome; usually a big turnout of rods and American heavy metal and always something interesting. Live music, 50/50 drawing for the Wounded Warrior Project.
- 31 Oct-1 Nov 2014—Volvo Club of America National Meet**, hosted by the Ozark Rollers VCOA in Eureka Springs, AR. For details including meet location for the drive to Eureka Springs, email gateway.vcoa.chapter@gmail.com.
- 1 Nov 2014—MG Club of St Louis Annual Halloween Drive**. Meet at the Target in Chesterfield Valley at 1 PM for a pleasant drive to Moscow Mills and the Eagle Fork Corn Maze, followed by dinner at Harry J's Steakhouse. Costumes optional but highly encouraged, monitor www.stlouismgclub.com/.
- 8 Nov 2014—Annual Museum of Transport Wheels and Wine**. Enjoy tasting some of the region's finest wines and foods amongst the museum's vintage cars, 7 to 9 PM. Call (314)615-8MOT to purchase tickets, other info at <http://transportmuseumassociation.org/>.
- 9 Nov 2014—SLTOA 2nd Annual Veterans Day Drive**. Run down the Mississippi River on the Illinois side to Chester, lunch in Perryville and then return as a group via US 61 or at your own pace by a different route. Open to all local special interest/enthusiast car clubs, donation requested, proceeds benefit the Fisher House Foundation (www.fisherhouse.org). Plan on meeting at the McDonalds in Columbia, IL on Hwy 3 at 10-ish, for more information email rangermk@sbcglobal.net.
- 9 Nov 2014—Last Boeing Sports Car Club autocross** of the season, Family Arena, St Charles, \$35 for six runs, show about 9 AM. Contact Racer Steve at sshab@yahoo.com for details and to get on the event email list.
- 15 Nov 2014—5th Annual MG Club Sporting Clays Shoot**, Blackhawk Valley Hunt Preserve, Old Monroe, MO. Golf with shotguns! Monitor www.stlouismgclub.com/.

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Note: Some club driving events restrict participation to club members only, primarily for national/chapter insurance reasons. If interested in joining in on a drive or other event, we recommend you contact the club's event coordinator in advance for details.

In Print

The car magazines are continuing to publish new car information, including the 27 October 2014 issue of *Autoweek*, which contains info on the Volvo S60/V60/V60 Polestar and the Jaguar F-Type. Concerning the latter marque, October's *Octane* has a cover story on the production of the six new lightweight E-Types.



Over at *Classic & Sports Car*, a cover story on Big Healeys, including a road comparison between an Austin-Healey 100 ("The body was rakishly contemporary yet unfussy and perfectly proportioned") and a 3000 MkIII Phase II. The October issue also con-



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Roadwork: Game Changer, Rd 2

One crisp November day in 1970, at the new Road Atlanta race course northwest of Braselton, Georgia, a group of 19 cars took their places on the grid for the Sports Car Club of America's national championship C Production race. The eclectic mix which made up the CP field included three Lotus Elans, two Datsun 2000s, a single Triumph TR6 – Bob Tullius in the Group 44 car – as well as nine of the new Porsche 914/6s. Another new car debuted at the 1970 Road Atlanta race, making up the remainder of the C Production field: the Datsun 240Z. In the car's first year of national competition, four Zs qualified for SCCA championship race, driven by Bob Sharp (No. 33), John Morton (No. 46), John McComb (No. 33) and Jack Scoville (No. 61).

The SCCA had initiated its end-of-year series – appropriately titled “The American Road Race of Champions” – some six years earlier at Riverside International Raceway in southern California; prior to moving to Georgia for the 1970 event, the ARRC alternated between Riverside and Daytona. As for Road Atlanta, it opened with a bang just over two months earlier, on 13 September, when it hosted the 7th round of the 1970 CanAm championship. According to photographer and Georgia resident Hal Crocker, “...Road Atlanta was a very fast track, a potentially dangerous track, especially for drivers who were somewhat lacking in that kind of experience.”



Bob Sharp. Source: The Glen

Getting 240Zs to the ARRC in their first year of production and sales proved something of a mad scramble, but Nissan, through its competition department, Bob Sharp Racing, Brock Racing Enterprises and others, pulled it off. Sharp was one of the early Datsun racing drivers, winning G Production races in the northeast in an SPL310/Sports 1500 when he wasn't busy selling Ramblers and Datsuns at a Connecticut dealership. In 1967, he won the F Production title at Daytona, driving a 1600. Scoville, a Datsun dealer from Corvallis, Oregon, took the 1969 D Prod championship in a Sports 2000.

Nissan formed its Competition Department in 1967 specifically to support racers in North America through parts, technical expertise and financial support. Sharp became the company's competition consultant while his team, Bob Sharp Racing, served as Nissan's east coast “works” organization. Duane Feurhelm, owner of Auto Works in Granada Hills, California, handled the initial Datsun competition and parts effort in the western United States.

Bob Sharp Racing did the initial development on the first racing 240Z, albeit through rather unique circumstances. In the spring of 1969, Nissan shipped one of the first cars – chassis 00006 – to the states for display at April's New York International Auto Show; the company followed up by putting the car on display at the Canadian International Auto Show in Toronto. However, when a model sat on the roof of the car for photo purposes, she managed to dent the vehicle. Nissan immediately pulled the damaged car from public display (and presumably sent a replacement) and gave the car to Sharp for conversion.

About two months later, as the first production 240Zs reached North America, two cars (chassis 00492 and 01733) went to...BRE, not Auto Works. Through a sequence of confused communications, politics and curious dealings, Nissan had found itself supporting two works outfits in the western US, Pete Brock's BRE with drivers Morton, McComb and Frank Monise and Feurhelm's Datsun Racing Team with Feurhelm, Dan Parkinson and Jon Woodner handling the driving chores. Nissan Motor Corporation USA president Yutaka Katayama (the legendary “Mr K”) ultimately decided to con-

centrate factory support with BRE, hence the arrival of the 240Zs at Brock's shop.

To his credit, Brock had already built up quite a reputation for design work on the 1963 Corvette, Shelby Daytona Cobra and Triumph TR250K among others and possessed competition experience with a variety of cars before concentrating on Datsuns. His team initially ran two Datsun 2000s in D Production in 1969 with Monise and Morton (who knew Brock from their Shelby American days) but for the 1970 season it swapped out the 2000's SU carbs for Mikuni/Solexes, which booted the cars up a class to C Production. The move, which put the cars up against vehicles like the Porsche 911, surprised plenty of race watchers. However, according to Rod Beddington of the Datsun Fairlady web page, there was a method to BRE's madness:

It was a shrewd move of Brock's to move Morton up to C Production early in the 1970 season...This decision was put down to the fact that Nissan and Brock wanted the roadster to collect both C & D Production titles. The reality was that although Brock knew that the 240Z was destined for C Production, he needed time to develop the new model, having only taken delivery in January 1970. If Morton could gain sufficient points at the wheel of the roadster in the meantime, then he would have a chance of qualifying the Z for the ARRC – invitation to the runoffs was made to the driver not the car, provided that the driver had qualified in the appropriate SCCA class. The roadster proved successful enough against the competition to help gain Morton his ARRC place at Road Atlanta...

The BSR and BRE 240Zs hit the tracks in the spring of 1970; notably, much of the Brock team's initial, uh, “evaluations” of the fast, six-cylinder Nissan took place at tracks in the eastern US, such as Morton's drive in an April SCCA national at Virginia International Raceway. At October's national at Road Atlanta – a natural preliminary for the ARRC – Sharp took second place in his Z-car and first in CP, behind Dan Carmichael in a C Sports Racing Lotus 23. Morton, running D Production in a Sports 2000, finished fourth overall and first in class.



Pete Brock (center), John Morton and the BRE 240Z team. Photo: *Road & Track*

Roughly a month later, again at Road Atlanta, it all came to a head in the C Production shoot-out for the national class championship. This time Morton, driving a BRE 240Z, came out on top at an average

speed of 91.96 mph, beating Sharp to the finish line by a total of 2.6 seconds. John McComb placed third in the second BRE car, followed by Forbes-Robinson and Johnson in Porsche 914/6s. Bob Tullius in the Group 44 TR6 engaged in a spirited race with the others through the 11th lap, when his Triumph failed; in



Morton leads Tullius, Johnson and Sharp at the 1970 ARRC. Artwork by Hector Cademartori.

fact, the only other British cars to finish the race were two Lotus Elans, driven by Steve Glassey and Ray Boulay to 13th and 14th places respectively. BSR driver Jim Fitzgerald had a particularly good day, running his Sports 2000 to sixth place in CP amidst a gaggle of Porsches while also taking the D Production crown in another 2000, beating out Carl Swanson in the Group 44 Triumph GT6.

Despite the debut of the new, mid-engined 914/6s, the 1970 race marked the end of Porsche's domination of C Production, which dated to Jerry Titus' victory at Riverside in a 911 in 1966. The 1970 event at Road Atlanta served as the first national championship for the 240Z and initiated a remarkable 10-year run for the cars in SCCA road racing.

Morton in the No. 46 BRE car repeated the feat at the 1971 ARRC, again beating Bob Sharp; Dan Parkinson and Jim Fitzgerald placed third and fourth in 240Zs while Rob McFarlin came in sixth. Allan Girdler, writing in *Road & Track*, said Morton "... put on an exhibition, leading all the way in his routine madman style and power always fully on, into each corner at seemingly impossible speed, out with wildly spinning tires, using all the road in the process."



The Bob Sharp Racing lineup. Source: Bring A Trailer.

The Datsun steamroller continued at the 1972 event, which saw Bob Sharp finally win the national C Production championship in his No. 33 car, besting Tullius in the TR6. Jim Fitzgerald, Jim Gammon and Ron McFarlin finished 3rd, 5th and 6th in Z-cars. Sharp also took the B Sedan race in a Datsun 510, with other 510s taking four of the top five spots, punctuated by a single BMW 2002. Datsun 2000s dominated the D Production contest with Bob McQueen coming in first, followed by Brian Fuerstenau in the Group 44 GT6 and four other Datsuns. McQueen won the President's Cup for his race-long battle with Fuerstenau.

In 1972 Pete Brock shut down BRE and moved on to other pursuits, primarily hang gliding; Don Devendorf's Electromotive took over the factory Datsun efforts in the western United States. At the now renamed Champion Spark Plug Road Racing Classic at Road Atlanta in November, Sharp took the trophy

again, besting Gary Rodriguez in a Lotus Europa with the 240Zs of Walt Maas, Dan Parkinson and Logan Blackburn in trail. The following year, Sharp finished third in a 260Z, behind the similar cars of race winner Maas and Blackburn. Notably, legendary St Louis sports car importer/dealer Ed De Brecht entered also entered a 260Z, driven by Gerry Mason; unfortunately, it didn't finish the race.

Datsun 280Zs took the next three C Production championships, driven by Sharp, 1975; Elliot Forbes-Robinson, 1976; and Logan Blackburn in 1977 in one of the former Brock Racing Enterprises cars, upgraded to 280Z standard.



Frank Leary drove his 280Z to the 1978 CSPRC trophy and in 1979 a quiet, capable driver who was known for occasionally dabbling in movies, P.L. Newman, scored the 10th straight 240/260/280Z victory at Road Atlanta, driving for Bob Sharp Racing.

P.L. Newman in the BSR 280Z. Photo via The Garage Blog.

The victories and the fun continued into the 1980s, although after 1975 several of the Z car owners, drivers and teams concentrated on a new GT series created by the International Motor Sports Association, aka IMSA. That's a story for another day.

Sources: Hemmings; *Sports Car Digest*; *Brock Racing Enterprises*, <http://bre2.net>; "The Racing History of Datsun," www.datsunhistory.com; "A Brace of Racing Zs," *Road & Track*, June 1980; Jim Donnelly, "Georgia Rhythm," February 2009; *Racing Sports Cars*, www.racingsportscars.com/; David Wallens, "American Road Race of Champions," *Grassroots Motorsports*; "Six Nissan Z Packs Displayed at Rolex Monterey Motorsports Reunion," *Top Speed*, 10 August 2010; Andrew Bornhop, "BRE Nissan 370Z & Datsun 240Z," *Road & Track*, 14 July 2010; Carl Beck, "The Z Car Goes Racing and Ends Up In the History Books," 28 June 2009, <http://zhome.com/Racing/Racing.htm>; Rob Beddington, "Before BRE swept up on the West Coast, Nissan USA backed Duane Feurhelm's Datsun Racing Team," *Classic Fairlady Roadster Register*, www.datsun.org/fairlady/.

In Print (Continued from page 1)

tains an article on the Lister Sunbeam Tiger prototype, which failed to run Le Mans back in 1964 but did make this year's 24-hour Le Mans Classic. And finally, yet another cover story, this time in *Thoroughbred & Classic Cars*, comparing a Mini Cooper S and Jaguar Mk2 with the Alfa Romeo GTA, Lotus Cortina and Ford Mustang. Also presented for your consideration, an article on a drive through California in a Tiger.

Finally, congrats to Gateway VCOA member Jim Jeske, featured in September-October's issue of *nineMagazine*, the publication of KETC-9 in St Louis.

Up & Coming (Continued from page 1)

5 Dec 2014—St Louis Triumph Owners Association Christmas Party. At the Missouri Athletic Club-West, 1777 Des Peres Rd, Town & Country; cash bar at 6:30, dinner at 7:30, "Rob Your Neighbor" gift exchange after the meal. \$17 per person (SLTOA will pay the difference), please make your reservation by 30 November with Ann Stark, 16 Brazillian Court, Ladue 63124 (checks only please). Questions? Call Ann Stark (314)993-5314 or Kathy Kresser (636)394-3012.

13 Dec 2014—Gateway Z Club Christmas Party, details to come, monitor www.gatewayzclub.com/.

22-25 Jan 2015—Annual St Louis Auto Show, America's Center/Edward Jones Dome, downtown St Louis. Info at www.saintlouisautoshow.com.

24 Jan 2015—MG Club of St Louis Annual Holiday Party, at Squires, 1415 S 18th St, Lafayette Square. Details to follow, monitor www.stlouismgclub.com/.

Featured Events

West-by-Southwest Drive
St Louis Triumph Owners Association
5 October 2014



Photo by Jake Thoma



Annual Concours d'Elegance, Kemp Museum
JAGSL, 11 October 2014



Featured Events

33rd All British Car & Cycle Show
20 September 2014



Photos by Simon Dix, Don Hiscock and John Moore

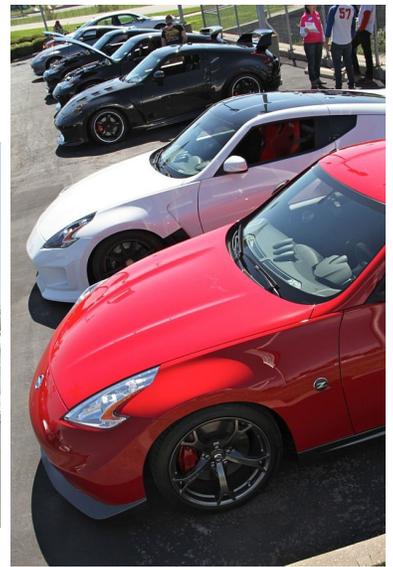


Day Trip to Florida/Mark Twain Birthplace
JAGSL, 27 September 2014



Featured Events

**Z Car Show, Bommarito Nissan
Gateway Z Club, 14 September 2014**



Photos courtesy of
Ryan McManama/
Rolling Stock
Photography



**F-Type Debut, Gateway Motorsports Park
Jaguar Association of Greater St Louis,
18 September 2014**



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