



VOLUME 41

SNAKESKIN

COBRA CAR CLUB OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

NOVEMBER 2013

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Peter hits the road



New Milestone for Tony - it runs

Tony Varis is all smiles as he fires up the Cobra for the first time



PRESIDENTS REPORT BY DAVE KENT

G'Day Cobra nuts

Well the festive season is looming again even though it seems like it is only a few months since the last one. I am sure we are all looking forward to spending time with family and friends over the Christmas break. So to all club members and their families have a happy and safe break and we will see everyone after the break.

Don't forget the Cobra Club Christmas function is on this coming Sunday 01 December and once again I would like to say a big thank you to Ron & Nola McNally for offering the "Dawesville Deck" for the function and for their efforts in arranging catering for this event so everybody can relax and enjoy themselves. If last year is anything to go by it will be a top day.

A big thank you also to Eddie Terrell for stepping into the chair for the last meeting and to Graeme Dowsett for looking after the supper while Jessie and I were bludging in Bali. Much appreciated gents.

Well done to Ricky Virago for organising the recent track day. From the comments of those who attended it was a thoroughly enjoyable day.

Don't forget there is no club meeting in December so the next meeting is on the 22nd of January 2014.

Enough of my rambling it's the season to relax so stay safe over the break and get your snake out in the sun and have some fun. (The car you dirty little buggers)

To one and all have a Merry Christmas and a happy new year.

Cheers

Dave Kent

Dave Kent (President)



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CLUB CALENDAR 2013/2014

Month	Club Runs		Club Meeting	Event	Depart Time	Information	Organiser
	Sat	Sun	Wed				
Sept	14			Super Southern Weekend Run	7:30AM	Armadale start for a Bush Breakfast	Dave Kent
Sept			18	Whoop Ass Wednesday	4:00 PM	Motorplex	Alan Dewar
Sept			25	Veteran Car Club (BBQ)	6:30 PM	BBQ and September General Meeting	Club
Oct	12	13		Lancelin Motor Museum		OR Goomalling Sprint - 19th Oct	Dragan Simic / Ron McNally
Oct	26			Go Karts Wanneroo	TBA	Club Kart Champion	Troy Kent
Oct			23	Veteran Car Club (BBQ)	6:30 PM	BBQ and October General Meeting	Club
Nov	9	10		Margaret River / Overnight	8:00 AM	Depart Pinjarra - 8:00AM	Ron McNally
Nov			13	Whoop Ass Wednesday	4:00 PM	Motorplex	Allan Dewar
Nov	Thurs 21st Nov			RAC Track Day	TBA	Club Outing	Ricky Virago
Nov			27	Veteran Car Club	6:30 PM	November General Meeting	Club
Dec		1		Christmas Function	TBA	Ron & Nola's Dawsville Resort	Ron McNally
Dec			14	Gidjegannup Blast	TBA	Progressive Pickup to TBA	Dragan Simic / Ron McNally
Jan		12		Beach Breakfast Run	7:00 AM	Meet at a Restaraunt or BBQ (Yanchep) for Breakfast	Simon Glossop
Jan			22	Veteran Car Club (BBQ)	6:30 PM	BBQ and January General Meeting	Club
Feb	8			Big Al's	All Day	Big Al's Poker Run	Jessie Kent
Feb	22			Galaxy Drive In	6:00 PM	Galaxy Drive In - Movic Night	Simon Glossop
Feb			26	Dick and Leone Hogen-Esch	6:30 PM	Departing Hungry Jacks Baldivis - depart 7:00PM.	Ron McNally
Mar		8		Harry's Fish and Chip Run	10:00 AM	New Norcia for Lunch	Ricky Virago
Mar			19	Whoop Ass Wednesday	4:00 PM		Allan Dewar
Mar			26	Club Meeting	6:30 PM	BBQ and March General Meeting @ South Perth Foreshore	Club
Apr	12			Graham Sach Memorial Run	TBA	York Railway Carriages	Allan Dewar
Apr			23	Veteran Car Club (BBQ)	6:30 PM	BBQ and April General Meeting	Club
May		11		Dwellingup / Boddington	8:00	Meeting at Ye Olde Narrogin Inne at Armadale	Dragan Simic
May			28	Veteran Car Club (BBQ)	6:30 PM	BBQ and May General Meeting	Club
June	14			Stringy Bark	10:00 PM	Depart Burswood Car Park	Alan Dewar
June			TBA	Barbagello Tuning Day	TBA	Find club to play with	Ricky Virago
June			25	Veteran Car Club	6:30 PM	BBQ and June General Meeting	Club
July		13		Jarrahdale BBQ	12:00	Dave Johns (Confirmed)	Dave Kent
July			23	Veteran Car Club	7:30 PM	AGM Followed by the July General Meeting and supper	Club
Aug	9			Dyno Tuning Day	8:30AM	Andrew Finch / Allan Dewar	Andrew Finch / Allan Dewar
Aug			TBA	Belmont Indoor Karts		Club Kart Champion	Alan Dewar
Aug			27	Veteran Car Club (BBQ)	6:30 PM	BBQ and August General Meeting	Club

GARDNER DOUGLAS BUILD - BY PETER GRAY

At long last, after 22 months and many hundreds of hours in the garage, my Gardner Douglas 427 Mk4 is at last registered and 'on the road' legal - it has been a difficult and sometimes fraught journey.....but ultimately worth all the hassle and grief....

Being the first GD 427 into Australia, the first three months were spent (wasted?) in the discussion, preparation and execution of a successful chassis torsional test. The car passed the mandatory 600Nm / degree loading with no modifications being required to the standard chassis. During the construction phase there were many discussions and much scrutineering of many aspects of the design and build - none more so than areas that pushed the limits or challenged the historical practises that are the current requirements and benchmarks for ICV builds within WA. It's been a long, hard journey - but that's all in the past now as the first GD427 is through the maze and subsequent GD constructions WA or imports will hopefully experience a very much easier route to registration. For me, one of the best experiences of the build has been to see reactions go from an initial sucking of air through teeth accompanied by a sagely shake of the head to people openly saying how impressed they are with the result and the quality. Some have been amazed when I have had time to explain that other than the top and collapsible element of the steering assembly there are no second hand or salvage overhaul parts - it's all brand new OEM or bespoke components. As with all these builds - they are never 'finished' and I already have a small list of changes and improvements that I want to introduce over time. However, right now is the time for driving and enjoying the car.

So the final piece of the story starts at the end of September and I had just sent the last report to Eddie. I reported that the car had just failed its first visit to Welshpool 'pits' on six points and I was just starting getting organised and beginning to look for a replacement for my poor smashed pocket camera and fixing or mitigating each of the noted noncompliance/failures I had been issued with.

The exhaust clamp, top and bottom coil-over location nuts, side mounted turn indicator lamps were all fixed on a couple of days... The ignition immobiliser took quite a bit longer as I had to locate an Au certified and compliant unit and then find a way of securing it into the very restricted space at the back of the dash. As it turned out, finding a suitable unit turned out to be a very easy but quite expensive exercise. I had also contacted Image wheels in the UK who were kind enough to send through all their documentation pertaining to their design compliance and TUV audit trail to both BS and ISO standards for automotive rim construction. At the same time I was spending my weekends experimenting with caster plates and tyre pressures in order to introduce some improvements to the steering self-centering. This proved to be both difficult and something of a "chicken and egg" situation as all of the steering components comprising of.. three UJ's, the centre bearing, the steering rack, the drop arm bearings and the uprights top and bottom swivel bearings are all brand new and 'tight' requiring some time and use in order to wear in and ease. Obviously when the system is all new elements there is an inherent component and ultimately a cumulative system resistance that will require kilometres on the car to wear in. Unfortunately that cannot happen until I obtain registration; which is a struggle due to the tight steering...QED.

In the end I decided to ignore the design parameters and install as much caster as necessary to the front uprights to get the thing to centre at an acceptable level. This eventually translated into 12 degrees of positive caster and some revisions to the front tyre pressures [Mercedes geometry !!] rather than the 4.5/5 of caster that the car is designed for. Having both this rather extreme setting coupled with ride height settings being 30mm higher than designed resulted in the suspension geometry being pretty much maxed out and on or outside of the suspension design limits. The result of all this was that although I had a vehicle with suspension that was sufficient to get through the pits examination, the cars actual overall handling and behaviour characteristics left 'quite a bit' to be desired if one was a bit enthusiastic with the 'loud pedal'.....[could easily be referred to as 'bloody dangerous'...]

GARDNER DOUGLAS BUILD - BY PETER GRAY

The car was duly returned to the Welshpool examination centre on 2nd Oct and to my surprise the same inspector from my previous visit came out to check it out - 5 items were swiftly dispatched with as 100% and ticked off the list. Having obtained huge amounts of data on the Image rim construction and compliance I did not have to actually hand any of it over - as long as I could prove compliance that was sufficient - I'm still trying to figure that one out. There was a "meaningful discussion" around the steering centring as the inspector still had a preference to feel a bit more but did accept my "chicken and egg" theory and the fact that the self-centering would improve over time as components wore in. So I was delighted when he passed the car and was in fact very complimentary about the whole construction and build. Interestingly, while we sorted through the paper work he commented that WA transport are *apparently* looking at adopting the European IVA rules for ICV's perhaps as early as 2014 - I can only say it gets my vote as it would not only dramatically clarify design and build requirements but also hugely simplify the whole process and rego criteria. He also seemed to suggest that it would result in accepting 3 gas testing for ICV's rather than the current 5 gas.... Obviously these were simply his comments and views in a private conversation and cannot in any way be taken as a 'given' but it would be interesting if any other club members have heard any rumors or mutterings about this...if not perhaps we should start our own rumors !

After getting the car back home from Welshpool I was straight off to the Rockingham DOT offices to pay up the due taxes, pick up the plates I had on retention, and get my hands on the registration document....

The only remaining job then was to [dammit, yet again - but for the very last time !!] remove the dash and finally cover it. GD usually fit an 'open' sponge foam under the dash leather and most of the home builders seem to prefer quite a thick (6 – 8mm) foam. I had decided not to follow this and to use a much thinner closed foam. For me, this produces a 'padded feel' but with a much flatter and appealing look to the dash. Before I could even attempt that I had the problem that due to ductwork, wiring harnesses , ECU, relay boxes and instrumentation etc etc there was little or no room left to permanently fit the immobiliser electronics. In the end I decided to remove the glove box which would give up sufficient space for the immobiliser housing to be fixed to the back of the dash. Fortunately I had kept the original glove box cut out so I could simply glass it back in. Once done it was on to gluing the foam into place and cutting out the holes for the various bits and bobs , stretching and gluing the leather into place around its edges and then reassembling the whole thing before refitting, hopefully for the last time.... How many times have I said that !!

Over time the dash has been subjected to quite a number of changes and revisions - this is evidenced by the amount of repair glass that now makes up the final dash profile [pic 1]] It took quite a few hours to put it all together and get the wiring loom in as I wanted but the result was a dash that looks great and I'm really pleased with; that was until a few days later when I noticed that I had not quite stretched the leather sufficiently over the near side end of the dash. It's *very* marginal - but it one of those things that once seen - that's all I can see now. After having spent a long time on the build I intend to enjoy it as much as possible this summer so I've decided to leave it until next winter when I intend to finish up the frame, cloth hood and side screens and can pop the dash off and re-stretch the leather at the same time. I also have another small change to carry out on the dash as during the final dash build I changed out the typical bulb holder and the old style 2W peanut bulbs usually found on dash indicators and alarms for aircraft quality diode lamps. They look and operate extremely well with the exception of the turn indicators that are not really bright enough and the level of illumination is very easily swamped by ambient light levels on our beautiful summer days. With the dash lights on at night they are spot on but in daytime driving I have found myself having to rely on the column stalk position to establish if the turn indicators are on or not. The car is too noisy to hear the relay going in and out so a suitably noisy sounder wired into the turn circuit will be the simple answer - but that's one of the jobs that can wait until next winter.

GARDNER DOUGLAS BUILD - BY PETER GRAY

So all of a sudden there was my car finished and on the road...I still have the boot carpet to finish up properly and I still have to take it back to the sprayer for a final flat and some repairs to scratches and a couple of chips picked up during the last few months. I intend to be out and about and enjoy the car as much as possible through the warm months and will then as I said earlier, complete the frame, hood and side screens next winter when the car is boxed up in the garage.

I had hoped to get the car to the club but unfortunately as I write this I'm still recovering from being quite ill which resulted in my missing October's meeting. Without doubt the car and I will be at Hale Road on 27th Nov.

I have a request....I want to fit 'bullet style' rear view mirrors to the windscreen side supports - normally I would want to fit them to the wing arches but it's extremely difficult to bolt them into the GD wings due to the very thick layup, the double skinning and cavity fillings so I have no option but to fit them to the screen frame uprights -

I have seen a number of club members cars with some very nice looking mirrors mounted on the screen frame uprights - I would be really grateful if anyone can point me in the right direction for a supplier .



KATANNING WEEKEND - BY RON MC NALLY

CCCWA November 2013 Club Run

The planned run was for something different to go to a WA Sprint Car event in Goomalling and then we received an invitation from Jamie Shuttleworth to the Katanning "Octane Festival" in Katanning.

Jamie is one of our country members with a DRB 540. Taking Jamie up on their invitation and hospitality to stay with Jamie and Suzanne. Starting numbers were always small and as we got closer to the event, Jamie being a revhead like the rest of us overcooked some playing around on his quad and broke a collar bone ... not for the 4th time ... not a simple fix so he spent Friday, Saturday & Sunday in Perth getting himself fixed.

The Run

Getting Away - Starters were John & Terri and Ron & Nola .. weather was always a bit iffy but we decided it wouldn't have much impact and if it did then it wouldn't be much. Ron & Nola left Dawesville in perfect Cobra weather to meet up with John & Terri at the Doe in Pinjarra All good then got a phone call from John to let us know he was holding off on his departure because he was waiting for a shower of rain in Canning Vale to pass. Still ok but you can see that we're on notice. Ron & Nola enjoy their light lunch at the Dome then become a little concerned at the Conning Vale rain reaches Pinjarra so cover the car and have another coffee. John and Terri arrive and there is no hanging around .. off we go in light rain all the way through Dwellingup, Boddington, Crossman and about 50k South on Albany Highway .. then it clears Coffee stop at Williams and a fantastic Cobra run south then east to Katanning.

Katanning

With Jamie in hospital we organised to stay in a B&B and we had a whole house with undercover parking to ourselves – how good is that (little issue with a stump in the middle of the gate getting to the back of the house). After settling in, unpacking some refreshments and some relaxing, where to eat was the next priority. About 500m from the B&B was a Chinese restaurant in an old church .. more refreshments, good food & company .. the night passed quickly. Breakfast Saturday was a part of the package at the 'main' B&B property Met up with some other 'Octane' participants and filled up on a great country breakfast ... then off to clean up the cars and to the 'show area in the main street'.

Octane Festival

We met up with a good number of locals, welcomed and treated to their hospitality ... we were made to feel a part of the local community Thank you Katanning.

Ernie Menghini painstakingly rebuilt this AC Cobra about 6 years ago after finding it in a Perth Doctors Garage. To say that he has done a good job is an understatement ... attention to detail and quality of finish is spot on.



KATANNING WEEKEND - BY RON MC NALLY

The event was very well attended, the main street had been cut off and about 60-70 cars of all sorts, bikes, tractors, trucks, sprint cars filling both sides of the street from about 8:00 to 12:00.



Next come the 'poker run' with about 40 cars, led by Travis Menghini, Great Southern Hwy to Broomehill, Kojonup, Woodanilling Great touring and Cobra Country.

The day is not over!

After finishing the Poker run, wiping the grin off our faces and freshening up back at the B&B, off to the Recreation Centre for the night's festivities a lot of people, a very entertaining auction of everything from vouchers to lawn mowers ... and presentation of prizes where the CCCWA was awarded the best "Team Display", gratefully accepted by John ... donating the petrol voucher back to our hosts to Auction for the benefit of the Katanning Speedway Club

KATANNING WEEKEND - BY RON MC NALLY



Nothing lasts forever:

We woke on Sunday morning to the start of Bathurst and after preparing our own 'cooked' breakfast from the goodies left for us ... headed back to Perth via some new roads John knew some back roads and all I can say is that they were some of the best

Cobra roads I have ever been on Arriving at Williams for a convenience break then West via Quindanning then the Dwellingup ... I think we surprised some locals and once again – just some fantastic Cobra Country.

OCTANE IN OCTOBER
 presented by
KATANNING SPEEDWAY CLUB

All Cars, Utes, Trucks, Bikes & Tractors Welcome.
 Nominations to: katanning.speedway.club@gmail.com or
 Travis Menghini 0427 974 364 Troy Hamon 0419 039 100

Entry Gold Coin Donation

12th October 2013 **life**
 Katanning
Morning Session
 Show 'N' Shine 9am - 1pm
 Clive Street

Prizes for Best Vehicles in their Classes. As voted by the Public.

Afternoon Sessions

Group A
 Super Cruze departs main street 1pm
 Katanning - Broomehill - Kojonup - Beaufort River
 Woodanilling - Katanning (4pm return)
 Convoy to meet at Rec Centre car park
 Licensed vehicles only

Group B
 Speedway tour and update
 Leave town at 1pm
 Out to Speedway off Oxley Rd for venue update
Sprint Car Hotlap Demonstration

Evening Session
 Auction Night & DJ
 5pm - 11:30pm Katanning Rec Centre Pioneer Room
 Hamburgers, Chips & Refreshments - Licensed Venue
NO BYO



Thankyou Jamie, Travis and the Katanning Speedway Club

MARGARET RIVER SLEEP OVER - BY RON MC NALLY

Margaret River Overnighter 10th & 11th November

The Margaret River weekend got away to a staggered start with,

Allan & Anna heading off early in the afternoon for a lunch on the way and a bit of quiet time in Margaret River before others arrived.

Ron & Nola joining up with John and Terry at Bunning's in Harrisdale after Ron & Nola were entertained by their youngest grandson at his kindergarten's "Grandparents day" ... Ron, Nola, John & Terri's run to Margaret River was brick and uneventful .

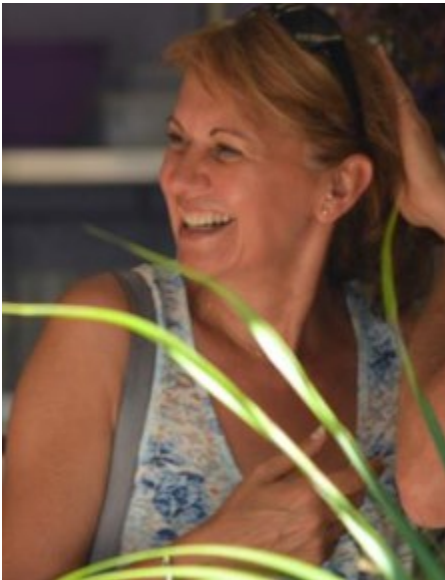
Meeting up with Allan and Anna at around 6:45 Then a few pre-dinner drinks before making our way to the Maharaja for some Indian cuisine ... must have been good because we were the last to leave (again).

Saturday morning Allan and Anna up early for a "run" around Margaret River while the rest of us slept and waited for the Dome to open for breakfast and John and Jill to arrive from Perth around 10:00. Anna and Nola did not waste any time finding somewhere to 'shop' and meet old friends.



With John and Jill's arrival we headed back to the 'accommodation' for a pit stop and for John / Jill to make some space in the boot. We headed off the Caves Road with nothing particular in mind. And who should find us from the other direction – Dick Hogen-Esch in his Ute so we stopped off at the Maze for some Coffee and set some plans The next stop was Gabriel Chocolate followed by a casual run into Dunsborough for Fuel ... then to a really lazy lunch at Rivendell followed by Cape Lavender (lavender ice cream), some chocolate indulgence at the Chocolate Factory and some more living the high life at the Nougat Factorybefore zig zagging our way back to Margaret River in between Caves Road and Vasse Highway.

MARGARET RIVER SLEEP OVER - BY RON MC NALLY



The 'indulgent' day was followed by a quiet night at a small restaurant in the main drag – what happens on the road stays on the road.

Sunday – John/Jill & Ron/Nol a had to head back home early being amongst the first 'breakfasters' to walk into the Dome at 7:00 and on the road by 7:30 Steady run back ... waving goodbye to John / Jil at the Old Coast Road turnoff on the Forrest Highway..

While Allan/Anna & John/Terri were off for some more of Margaret River. Sunday finishing off with a late breakfast (9:30) at Dome then a cruise out of town to the south to the Berry Farm then back to Bussell Highway to look for the new Coffee Factory and the Cookie Factory, neither of which they could find. Probably drove straight past them coz our cars

MARGARET RIVER SLEEP OVER - BY RON MC NALLY

are too fast. After a quick chat on the side of the road we decided to continue south towards August and then turned right into Caves Rd and headed north again along some really great cobra roads to a gallery/studio that John wanted to visit. (can't remember the name) Some interesting items there but very expensive. Then further north to the Duckstein for lunch for a very pleasant lunch and then a quick refuel at Dunsborough and pushed on through to Perth arriving home by about 6pm. John & Terri slowly faded off into the distance ahead of us on the way home. The must have had something important to do. 😊



Check out the smile as Pete Davids unwraps his engine and gearbox. Pete's car is starting to take shape, the motor and gearbox has been fitted and Pete is now working on the wiring.

In the next addition of the Snakeskin we will have more pictures and an update.

2013 RAC TRACK DAY BY RICKY VIRAGO



Thursday 21st November was a lovely warm day with temps in the low thirties and perfect for driving an open top car.

Ricky got the ball rolling with a sausage sizzle to fill a few hungry tummies (and to ballast the faster guys). Bit by bit, people turned up and settled into a bun and drink, general chat and light banter.

Before too long though, it was time to get the paperwork sorted and into a very short do's and don'ts briefing. After this it was time to line up for a leisurely sighting lap line astern so those that had not been on track before could get a little familiar with the track layout.



The first group headed out for the first three lap stint and it was obvious that people were testing the water a bit in terms of (wo)man and machine, with confidence steadily growing and speeds increasing steadily. Al Golding appear to be steadily getting to grips with his new found LS7 power and was caught thinking that maybe has gone just a little too far in the power stakes?



It wasn't long however before a few of the faster guys started getting more serious, along with the inevitable offs as a result. All nice and safe, but quite obviously, limits were starting to be pushed.

It was great watching a nice dice between Al Dewar and John Murdoch. Both in very close proximity to each other on the track and both exhibiting good car control. One little slip up however and there would have been tears. (But cheers from the spectators.....)

A few "Ring ins" appeared on the day too with Vern's mum in law (Christine) getting behind the wheel along with a few cobra owners "personal mechanics". Tony Varis dragged out the commodore race car for a dust off of the cob webs and Vicki brought out the Skyline for a blast. Simon brought out the rapid WRX for a bit of fun too and spent a lot of time on three wheels showing how much grip was available from the all wheel drive.

2013 RAC TRACK DAY BY RICKY VIRAGO

It didn't take long though for Eddie to commandeer the commodore and give it a good run. He looked to be pushing on, running wide in a few places but certainly showed a respectable effort. (Next year, the cobra just might have to make an appearance?)



Unfortunately there were a few breakdowns. Firstly Christine ground to a halt with a failed cobra out on the track and needed rescuing by tow truck. Andrew appeared to be suffering some starter issues, and Dave had an ignition barrel that just refused to stay "ignited". I am sure there were a few other minor niggles but they remained pretty quiet.

Overall everyone seemed to have had a blast. I'd like to thank everyone attending for making the day a success as without attendance it just would not happen. Steve from the RAC was also very thankful and appreciative of how the club conducted itself in terms of attitude, behaviour and of course the quality of the machinery. Bring on next year.

John Murdoch video is here <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RZJsTD1fhEM>

Ricky's spin is here <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TvGRUU7DX3k>



OUT AND ABOUT BY GRAHAM ULLOCK

A run up to Bindoon, with Dragan & his wife, Myself & a new prospective member Lorrie, and John Allen.

We met up at Johns place in the Swan Valley, and then went out to Gt Nthn H/way and direct run to Bindoon. Stopped off at the Bakery (as you do) for some early lunchtime eats, and then I headed straight back home, whilst the other two cars went cruising further.

Great day, beautiful weather, and good company.

Brockwell run, on Sunday 10th Nov.

Started off at South Beach Esplanade for a show& shine 9.00 - 10.30am, and then follow a route sheet through Fremantle out to Port Beach, then up the coast to Mindarie, and then inland to finish up at Whiteman Park for lunch.

Miles was there with his Corvette, and there was one other Cobra as well, not part of the club yet, but will be attending our next meeting to join up.

Beautiful weather, but got very hot as the day went on and by the time we left at 10.45am it was about 35 deg already. Not really the type of weather you want in a Cobra, particularly when you are stuck in traffic for hours.

Seems like everyone in Perth metro area was at the beach that day, and we were stuck in traffic going nowhere for a lot of the run up the coast.

When we were waiting for the lights at the intersection at Mindarie, to turn right to go inland, it felt like the heat in the cockpit was about 55 deg. with the heat coming up from the tunnel, and the side pipes from the outside, and the sun from above, just burning us up.

I decided that as we had just missed the lights, whilst we were waiting for the next round of green light, I would have time to get some more sun cream on, so I got it out and took the top off the tube, which then exploded into my hand because of the heat.

End result was, I had a handful of sunburn cream, and nowhere to put it, and the lights were now about to change.



I gave everyone around us some entertainment, as I started to get rid of my deluge of cream onto my passenger and myself, but then the lights changed, and I had to use the gearstick, and the steering wheel, with still handfuls of cream. Very difficult to drive when you can't grip anything, so we had to pull over and clean up the mess.

Such is life in a Cobra !!!!!

These shots are at the finish at Whiteman Park, where we all got together with some other drivers, under the shade of the trees and had lunch, and the usual yak about all things cars.

We also got free passes into the Motor Museum for the day.

Left Whiteman Park about 3.30pm and went home to the pool.



BOB BONDURANT BY SPORTS CAR DIGEST

Continued from Volume 40

SCD: Was the Ferrari your first F1 drive?

BB: Yes it was, and the amazing thing about that is I went back up to Monza and got a ride in a Lotus F3 car and ended up winning the race. I kept waiting for a phone call from Ferrari. One week went by, two weeks went by and I thought I pushed too hard. Then two days later I got a call from Ferrari to come back to the factory and be fitted for my F1 ride. That was incredible. I was so excited I was beside myself. So I flew over and got fitted for my ride. It was a Dino F1 car, they only had a couple of those.

SCD: Why did the seat become available?

BB: Surtees had had a big accident at Mosport and broken his leg. I don't know why they didn't give me a V12, but the V8 was really strong, too. In my first F1 race, at Watkins Glen, I started out 13th and worked my way up to sixth. I had goggles with elastic bands that I'd had for two or three years, and when it started raining the elastic in the goggles stretched and the goggles blew down. I thought, "What a horrible time for that to happen. My first F1 and in a Ferrari." But I had another pair of goggles in my helmet bag in the pits. I didn't know if I could speak Italian very well yet, so what am I going to do? If I leaned out the side of the car, the goggles would blow off and it would be very difficult to see. I had to pull them back up and put them on with my forefinger and go the rest of the race like that. I put my knee against the wheel and shifted with my right hand. I still ended up ninth. I got behind someone and he kept blocking me, and I could not get by, but it felt so great and the car was fantastic. When I drove the Ferrari, my whole mental picture of that chassis and car was super strong. I had driven Lotuses that were fragile, but I just drove the Ferrari and had confidence in it. I had never driven one before. When I flew over to get fitted for the car I just drove it around the factory in first gear. You are just sitting there and thinking: "I am really sitting in a F1 Ferrari at the F1 factory!" So I raced it at Watkins Glen, and the first few laps I am getting used to the car. Everything worked, it handled well, braked good. I got quicker and quicker and felt comfortable with the car. I qualified 13th and got a really good start. I did practice starts in everything I drove. I passed two or three cars and I was doing really well. They didn't give me any pit signals so I didn't know I was up to 6th place until after the race in the rain. The V12s had more power, but you couldn't use it in the rain. I had a V8 that didn't have as much. Everyone else was using V8s at that time. I finished 9th. Graham Hill was 1st, Gurney was 2nd, Jack Brabham was 3rd, and Bandini was 4th, Pedro Rodriguez was 5th, Rindt was 6th, and Ginther was 7th, Jo Bonnier was 8th—he was the guy who kept blocking me—and I was 9th. Richard Attwood was 10th, Jo Siffert 11th, Moises Solano was 12th. Jackie Stewart had suspension problems.

SCD: Did they ever say why they gave you a V8 rather than a V12?

BB: I never questioned it. I was so happy to be driving a Ferrari. I guessed that it was my first time in an F1 car and they probably did not think I would win. I qualified ahead of Pedro and he was in a V12.

SCD: F1 cars, not a lot of torque but a lot of revs?

BB: The cars are super light. You do not have the torque the V8 has, but you are running higher rpm.

SCD: Did you have to make a change in the way you drove?

BB: No, I had driven F3 then F2 then F1s so I was ready. The V8 had more torque than the V12. Five-speed transmission. When I was racing here I drove Old Yeller and that had a lot of torque. With the Cobras we were racing the Daytona Coupes against the Ferrari GTOs, again V12s, so our advantage is we had more torque and more initial acceleration so that helped a lot. None of us could beat the Ferrari until we raced against them and that was at Le Mans, and I thought Wow! They were very quick. We ended up, I believe, one lap ahead of the GTOs at Le Mans, and then we had the oil cooler break and we had to bypass it and bring down the rpm a little bit. We were going slow around and looking in the rear view mirror like a hawk to see if anything red was coming up.

BOB BONDURANT BY SPORTS CAR DIGEST

SCD: After Watkins Glen where did you race F1 again?

BB: Mexico, the next race. Scarfiotti drove the same Ferrari in Mexico that I had driven. I went down there with my helmet and suit, just in case. I ended up driving a Lotus for Tim Parnell. He was getting pissed because (his driver) Innes (Ireland) was late and so I was hanging out and Gurney was there. And Tim said, "Bobby, did you bring your helmet?" I said I did. "If Innes does not get here in time then I am going to put you in the car. Are you good with that?" I said, "Yeah." It wasn't a Ferrari, but I would get experience in another F1. So I got in the car and Innes finally came back about an hour later, and I asked Reg if I should get out, and he said no. Probably pissed off Innes, ha ha. So the car really worked good, but after about three-quarters of the race a trailing arm broke and put me out of the race. I was coming to a left-hand corner and when it broke a guy with his camera looked like he was falling over backward trying to get out of the way. So I talked to him afterward and asked if he was OK. He said, "You were doing really well. I've never seen you drive before." I said it was my second race. That was the day Richie gave Honda their very first win.

SCD: Didn't you drive an F1 Eagle?

BB: Yes. The next year I drove for Gurney in the Mexican and American Grands Prix. In the V12 Dan was having overheating problems and the four-cylinder car was working well, so he took over the smaller one and I took the V12. It never overheated when I drove it. He was probably driving it harder, I am guessing. Something happened to me at Watkins Glen. I missed the straightaway and went off once and got back on, but they said I was disqualified, I did not know I was disqualified. In Mexico, we were 16th. The fuel system failed, that is what happened. We were in 8th place. I was racing against the best. After Mexico then I got a ride for the Tasman Series in a BRM alongside Jackie Stewart and Graham Hill. The next F1 race for me was Monaco, where I ended up fourth. I had run that race before in a F3, so I knew the circuit well. The first time I ran it I was the fastest qualifier and set a new lap record.



Monza, 1965. Gurney Weslake Eagle V12 3-liter and Bob Bondurant. Do images come any better than this? (Bondurant Collection)

SCD: How many years did you race F1?

BB: I only ran F1 for one year; the end of '65, those two races U.S. and Mexico, and almost all of '66. My car was a two-liter BRM, and the early part of the season the other teams all had engine problems with the new three-liter engines, so it was like a sixth-place car. Then as the others got their engines going it became a ninth-place car. It was a private team, and they weren't quick about getting things fixed. The last time I drove for them in the pouring down rain at Watkins Glen they got the car there late and never even cleaned it up, so I grabbed a handful of wrenches and checked every nut and bolt. Some were a half turn loose, and I thought, "This is not the way I want to go racing." I never thought I would give up an F1 ride, but I told them, "You know, I just can't drive for you. I need to find a ride where I can trust the car." The guy was not a F1 mechanic. He worked on some rich guys' personal cars. Nothing big like F1 cars.

BOB BONDURANT BY SPORTS CAR DIGEST

He got to Monaco late. I was working on the movie then, *Grand Prix*, so we were driving the track every day shooting film. So my car arrived but he never brought it to the track on Friday. So I didn't get to drive it until Saturday. The battery was dead. It died going through the tunnel. I thought, "Oh shit, this is not good at all." It was never a great car. So they fixed it and I started last and had to work my way up. I went the distance and finished fourth, and it was wonderful and they gave me points. All the other F1 racers said their car was better. The English Grand Prix, I was doing well there and finished ninth. It was really becoming a ninth-place car.



1966 Mexico Grand Prix. Bondurant in the Gurney Eagle Weslake V12. (Bondurant Collection)

I always liked racing F1. I had always wanted to do it, and I would have liked to have stayed. When I thought I was going to drive for Gurney, I was real excited about that possibility and I knew I would do well. But then he felt he needed Richie to help him sort the cars because Richie was good at that. Jimmy Clark taught me a lot. I met him before I was racing F1, when I was driving Cobras. A lot of times the Cobra was a support race to the F1 in places and once I lost a rod coming around a corner. I sat down and talked to him later and I asked him when you brake for a corner trying to slow down do you brake hard? He said no. I said, "Do you brake a little softer and carry the braking longer?" And he said, "Yes I do. How did you know this?" I said, "That is what I do in the Cobras." Graham Hill also taught me. He was driving for BRM too. Jackie Stewart was really helpful, and we all got to know each other pretty well. For me, F1 meant not having a real competitive car to teach me how to drive F1 and drive with those guys. I drove them hard and it surely was a super experience for me. I was really hoping in '67 I could drive for Dan, and I knew we would do well. Both cars were set up well and he was always tinkering with little shit and it always worked. Then some little thing broke and I just figured if I just drove and left the car alone then I could do pretty well.



Bondurant in the Gurney Eagle Weslake V12 during the 1966 Mexico GP. (Bondurant Collection)



1966 Mexico Grand Prix. Bondurant practiced but did not race the Gurney Eagle Weslake V12. (Bondurant Collection)

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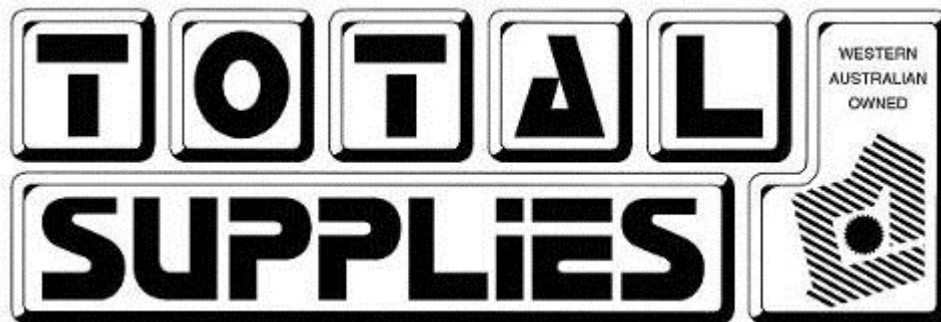
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