

DEL MONTE TROPHY RACE GROUP

Celebrating the Pebble Beach Road Races



RACE REPORT (RACE 2)

Laguna Seca - August 19, 2023

Marcus Bicknell reporting

Rolex Monterey Motorsports Reunion, Group 12 (1947-1960 front engine sports racing and GT, including the Del Monte Trophy race group from the Pebble Beach Road Races) Race 2

As in Race 1, the Pebble Beach Del Monte cars are joined in Group 12 by later models. Under blue Californian skies and ideal conditions, our 30 period race cars took to the track on the meeting's last day, the Saturday, for the second time. Ah ha! In the pre-race interview in the collecting area Al Arciero asks the interviewer to tell Greg to slow down a bit in the race. Greg Meyer, in turn, asks the interviewer to tell Al to speed up! Honour among thieves. As Henry Ford remarked, "Auto racing began five minutes after the second car was built."

Al Arciero sitting in his 1958 Knobbly recounts "When I got up this morning I had to take 4 Advils. It's hard work. It's hot. The exhaust pipes are by my feet. You really have to hold on; it has a mind of its own". Greg's remarks are similar; "5.6 inches of rubber; that's not a lot of contact patch to control a car of this power. But where's the best seat in the house to watch the races; sitting right here".

Our friend and running mate Jim Alder (Jaguar XK120 absent, gremlins, and he arrived from Reno Nevada on a Triumph 900 motorcycle) so we are pleased and honoured to be hearing him again in the commentator's booth providing insight into the live stream which you can watch anytime at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gzPkRJM4MeQ> near the end.

Two by two, rolling and looking at the starter's flag and lights, Al Arciero has positioned himself 2 car lengths ahead of pole sitter, Race 1 winner, Greg Meyer. He does the right thing and lets Meyer get his pedal to the metal first when the race is go go go. Meyer's blue/white 1959 Sadler Mk4 of 5555cc accelerates down the home straight, gapping the followers immediately.

So #6 Al Arciero in his silver 1958 Lister Knobbly of 5466cc follows Meyer into the Andretti Hairpin turn 2. #25C Blake Tatum (1953 Tatum GMC Special) from 5th on the grid slips ahead of #42 Brian MacEachern's silver 1956 Lotus XI but #18 Nicholas Colonna in his red 1958 Devin SS 5360cc stays in third. 9C Rob Manson, Steward of the Del Monte Trophy Race Group in his red 1953 Kurtis 500S Dodge 4523cc has also gotten ahead of the Lotus but lets Brian slip down the inside to the hairpin.

Jim Alder in the commentary box reminds us that Chuck Tatum had built the 1953 Tatum GMC Special before Blake his son was conceived! Blake, black helmeted and head down, works the wheel of his dad's motor as if he were part of it. By the way, did you know that Chuck Tatum, who passed on to the great race circuit in the sky in 2014, was an American World War II veteran and Bronze Star recipient. On 19 February 1945, he was among the first wave of marines to land on the Japanese island stronghold of Iwo Jima. Tatum's war memoir, *Red Blood, Black Sand*, was one of five books used as source material for the Steven Spielberg and Tom Hanks produced HBO miniseries *The Pacific*. Tatum is portrayed in the series by actor Ben Esler. Furthermore, son Blake drove a *Crusader*

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that was manufactured by his father's company to become the 1994 Formula Vee West Coast Regional Champion.

Brian MacEachern is kicking himself for his slow start. He nimbles his Lotus alongside Blake Tatum through 3 and emerges ahead of him through 4. Good work. As they go up the hill the TV camera clearly shows the top of Brian's head (such a little Lotus from Cheshunt in Hertfordshire, England) at the level of the radiator grill of the funky big Tatum (Los Angeles, California), such is the difference in size.

Meyer, Arciero, MacEachern, Colonna, Tatum, Manson slide left right through the Corkscrew on lap 1 and that's the order at the end of Lap 1, although MacEachern and Colonna are making a side-by-side battle of it. Meyer, unlike in Race 1, is 20 car-lengths ahead of the rest. Yes, Mr Commentator, he should slow down! #5 Follmer (who made a cracking start from 10th on the grid), 272 Grewal, 34 Miller (in the Lotus XI raced often by my hero Innes Ireland) and 11 Abramson make up the top ten.

| | | | | | |
|-----|------------------|------|-------------------------|--------------|------|
| 84 | Greg Meyer | 1959 | Sadler MK4 | blue/white | 5555 |
| 6 | Al Arciero | 1958 | Lister Knobbly | Silver | 5466 |
| 42 | Brian MacEachern | 1956 | Lotus XI | Silver | 1460 |
| 18 | Nicholas Colonna | 1958 | Devin SS | Red | 5360 |
| 25C | Blake Tatum | 1953 | Tatum GMC Special | White/Blue | 5000 |
| 9C | Rob Manson | 1953 | Kurtis 500S Dodge | Red/Black | 4523 |
| 5 | Mike Follmer | 1958 | Lotus 11 | Blue | 1600 |
| 272 | Nick Grewal | 1959 | Lotus 17 | Green | 1488 |
| 38 | Bruce Miller | 1958 | Lotus 11 British Racing | Green/yellow | 1460 |
| 164 | Mark Sange | 1956 | Le Mans Lotus XI | | |

The white #3 of John Buddenbaum, the 1949 Jaguar Parkinson, had clutch problems which sidelined him halfway through Race 1, so he switched to Rob Manson's 1952 Streets Manning Special and started from the back in Race 2. This is the car that I Marcus have raced several times at Laguna Seca, and it's lovable and quick.

Your best source of complete results with lap times is in my opinion at <https://www.race-monitor.com/Results/Race/136012>.

By the end of lap 2 MacEachern and Colonna have caught up Arciero so the Knobbly, the Devin and the Lotus are fighting it out for 2nd. In a similar group of three, Grewal leads Miller and the dark blue #164 1956 Le Mans Lotus XI of Mark Sange who was flying up the order from 22nd on the grid. How did he do that? Probably because the car is prepared by our friend Mike Ryan. They are in a bunch of busy little bees, all Lotuses and looking spectacular. Wow, Miller outbrakes Grewal in the hairpin on lap 3 and Sange is mixing it with them; real racing. #10 Piers Gormly in his green (with white stripe) 1958 Buyers/Volvo Special has the trio in his sights still. #5 Mike Follmer in his 1958 Lotus 11 is in 11th but out of touch. Mark Osborne's light green #24 1959 Rejo Climax Special has climbed to 12th from... nowhere! He did not feature in race 1 results so he must have started from the back of the grid.

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#17 Steven Lawrence 1959 Lotus 17 is followed by #814 Kevin Adair and 183 Mapstead at the end of lap 5. Kevin Adair drove the Elva but Dennis Adair, his father and car owner was presented with the 2022 Del Monte Trophy for under 2 litres form last year. Kevin proposed it was better that his dad got the award!

#X15 John Mote in his newly-restored Sorrell Kurtis Special, whose race number, rough-painted as in period, honours the Speed of Sound man Chuck Yeager. On October 14, 1947, the Bell X-1 *Glamorous Glennis*, piloted by U.S. Air Force Captain Charles E. "Chuck" Yeager, became the first airplane to fly faster than the speed of sound (Mach 1). The North American X-15 got to 4,520 miles per hour on 3 October 1967. Whether John Mote was supersonic or not, #4 Nick Price was challenging him into the hairpin on lap 6. Nick's 5½ Litre 1958 Sadler Meyer Special is not a Del Monte Trophy car but he does also race a Jaguar XK120. Just behind them #55 Abendroth was being challenged by John Buddenbaum in the #15 yellow Manning Special; John B was struggling with unpredictable handling and lack of power. So here comes the race leader Greg Meyer to overlap John B and the Manning.

To our regret we did not see on the TV pictures William Rooklidge's fabulous newly-restored Jaguar D-Type which followed Buddenbaum home. Rooklidge won Rolex Monterey Motorsports Reunion 2023 Race Group 12 Rolex Award and third place in the Pebble Beach Concours Postwar Competition class. John said on Friday after the first race "I took it out today in the first race, but mis-adjustment of the throttle and brake pedals prevented me from heeling and toeing to blip the throttle, which prevented me from downshifting from 3rd to 2nd, which is critical in this car at turns, two, eight and 11. So, I started, but did not finish. I plan to finish tomorrow." You might also note that Rhea Seher Dods, who helped her dad with the car and shared many adventures in it, currently works as the SCCA northern California, communications Director, and was reunited with the car today at Laguna Seca Raceway. More on this D-Type at <http://dmtrg.com/2023/08/19/jaguar-d-type-xkd-531/>.

Nor did we see on TV #1 Bernard Dervieux (1950 Allard J2), #85 Stewart Smith (1957 Lotus XI) and #11 Jeff Abramson (1950 MG TD John Von Neuman Special).

Into the last lap we see Al Arciero pedalling the Knobbly furiously; the smoke haze round the car at the hairpin looks like tyre lock-up, brake smoke and oil fumes all mixed together. At Turn 4 he misses the apex and the backend gives him a little twitch to say hello, I'm still here. Thank goodness he took those Advils.

And so it goes. Greg Meyer took the chequered flag looking relaxed by comparison and this fabulous collection of historic cars – seminal and iconic to motor racing's birth on the West Coast – came home for a well-earned cool-down in the paddock. Thank you gentlemen for bringing the cars and for racing them so ardently.

The race results were...

| | | | | | |
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| 84 | Greg Meyer | 1959 | Sadler MK4 | blue/white | 5555 |
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| 38 | Bruce Miller | 1958 | Lotus 11 British Racing | Green/yellow | 1460 |
| 10 | Piers Gormly | 1958 | Buyers/Volvo Special | Green | |
| 164 | Mark Sange | 1956 | Le Mans Lotus XI | | |
| 24 | Mark Osborne | 1959 | Rejo Climax | Light green, in 10 th position | |
| | | | | | |
| 5 | Mike Follmer | 1958 | Lotus 11 | Blue | 1600 |
| 272 | Nick Grewal | 1959 | Lotus 17 | Green | 1488 |
| 17 | Steven Lawrence | 1959 | Lotus 17 | Green | 1500 |
| 814 | Kevin Adair | 1955 | Elva Mk I Sport Racer | BRG | 1092 |
| 183 | Lars Mapstead | 1952 | Jaguar XK120 | black | 3400 |
| X15 | John Sr. Mote | 1955 | Sorrell Kurtis Special | | |
| 55 | Wesley Abendroth | 1955 | Chevrolet Mistral | Red | 4785 |
| 4 | Nick Price | 1958 | Sadler Meyer Special | Blue | 5555 |
| 15 | John Buddenbaum | 1951 | Manning Mercury | Yellow | 3800 |
| 54(15) | William Rooklidge | 1955 | Jaguar D-Type | Yellow | 3442 |
| 1 | Bernard Dervieux | 1950 | Allard J2 | Silver | 331 |
| 85 | Stewart Smith | 1957 | Lotus Eleven Green | | 1200 |
| 11 | Jeff Abramson | 1950 | MG TD John Von Neuman Special, | Red | 1488 |

Did not start or did not complete one lap...

| | | | | | |
|-----|-------------------|------|----------------------------|--------------------|------|
| 61 | Edward Nigro | 1959 | Lola Mk1 | red | 1460 |
| 65 | Michael Silverman | 1959 | Echidna Sports Racer | Blue | 5500 |
| 74 | Ned Spieker | 1961 | Ferrari 250GT SWB | Red | |
| 102 | Steve Sanett | 1957 | Lotus XI | white | 1460 |
| 111 | Timothy Scopes | 1959 | Lotus XI Series 2 Le Mans, | White/Blue Stripe, | 1490 |
| 155 | Kaiden Marouf | 1951 | MG TD | Green | 1275 |

Check out www.dmtrg.com/blog and scroll down for stories and pics. Colin Warnes and others have posted photos on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/MontereySportsCarRoadRacers> .

The DMTRG awards will be made at the Velocity Invitational at Sonoma in November.

On Sunday, several DMTRG cars competed Up the Corkscrew i.e. a hill climb from the pit straight to the top of the Corkscrew in the reverse direction. Slim Pepperdene drove Rob's blue Barlow Simca and Rob the Kurtis. Times and results not known.

Honoured guests in our paddock over the weekend; David Steel of the American Hot Rod Foundation and Mark Brinker writer of "Vintage American Road Racing Cars". Co-authors: Harold C. Pace and Mark R. Brinker. Publisher: Motorbooks. No longer in print but should be available in resale market.