



A-Antics



*Look into my eyes, my darlink,
und I will make you immortal!*



*Chelsea's version of 'Big Ben'
looms behind Tom Fant's
MGB, while the MG 'Super
Cape' is tried on by John &
Bruce inside the Depot*



*Superman's got
nothin' on me!*

A Mightier Magnette
Five Time Champion
Vapor Lock Solutions
Rowdie Christmas Party



MICHIGAN CHAPTER OF NORTH AMERICAN MGA REGISTER

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A-Antics: Published every other month. Opinions expressed are those of the writer and not necessarily of NAMGAR or the Chapter. Every effort is made to use appropriate material. The editor reserves the right to edit material for length and content. No placement is guaranteed. The entire contents are copyrighted, Michigan Chapter. Permission to use is granted, provided you give credit to both writer and the club.

History: The Chapter was established August 14, 1976. It was NAMGAR's first chapter. We are a low-key club, dedicated to the preservation and enjoyment of our MGA's/ Anyone is welcome to join our chapter and they are asked to join NAMGAR as well.

Chapter Dues: \$25 annually (\$40 for printed newsletter)

Nickname: Rowdies

Motto: People First!

Rowdies Site:
<http://www.mg-cars.org.uk/michiganrowdies/>

MG Car Council Site: <http://www.mg-cars.org.uk/mgcouncil/>

NAMGAR Web Site: www.namgar.com

Past Chapter Chairpersons:

1976-1980	Bruce Nichols
1981-1982	Tom Latta
1983-1984	Dick Feight
1985-1988	Dave Smith
1989-1990	Dave Quinn
1991-1994	Mark Barnhart
1995-1995	Herb Maier
1996-1996	Tom Knoy
1997-1998	Neil Griffin
1999-2002	Bruce Nichols
2003-2004	Bob Sutton
2005-2008	Gordie Bird
2009-2015	Dave Quinn



MEMBERS PAGE

Rowdies Website: Larry Pittman, Webmaster

<http://www.mg-cars.org.uk/michiganrowdies/>

Larry Pitman's Database Report: 54 Active and Paid-Up Members

Deadline for submitting material for the next issue is: February 20, 2019

Classified Ads

Letters

Interesting Riley Facts



Unbeknownst to many an automobile enthusiast is the fact that Riley RM Saloon cars are the only British cars which have actually been shown to be capable of levitation as during this rebuild demonstration at the November 2018 Birmingham, England Classic Motor Show. While levitating, an image of the Queen mysteriously appeared over the car, as if showing her approval of the work being done on the car.

Sir Algernon BlueBottom

Holiday Party Wrapup

Greetings to all from Chairman Bill;

We had a great Rowdie Christmas party Sunday, Dec 2nd, thanks to John Alexander, Carolyn King, Kevin Peck and Norma Meyers with assistance from Jeff and Deb Smith. For anyone who could not make it, a grand time was had by all with the famous Rowdie gift exchange and lots of visiting. See photos and a write-up in this A-Antics.

So now it is officially winter, as far as MG driving is concerned. I hope your MGs are safely and snugly stored for the next few months. For those of us lucky enough to have a

heated garage, it is time to dig into those projects we have been putting off during the driving season. For me, one of those projects is getting new rings in my recently rebuilt MGA engine, hoping that will stop the oil spewing. Another project is building a trailer hitch for the little motorcycle trailer I picked up recently. Look for a tech article on that one soon.

Start planning your MG activities for 2019. Consider hosting an event next year. All you have to do is think of something you want to do and invite the rest of us along. Bring your ideas to the business meeting on February 16th in Holt, MI.

Here's hoping you all had a Happy Holiday season!

Bill Weakley

Here It Comes, Ready Or Not

Hi Rowdies,

I thought you might like to see comments on global warming from our own Professor Hoffman:

<http://www.michiganradio.org/post/how-insurance-industry-could-help-change-climate-skeptics-minds>

Andy sounds a bit more optimistic than some who study climate science. One can't help but think about this stuff, it is in the news so much. In spite of what a few people in high government office say, most of the world seems to be accepting that we need to do something to avoid a climate disaster. The car companies are moving much quicker than I would have expected. Of course, they have to plan a number of years in advance. Many have declared their intention to move completely to electric vehicles in a relatively short time. I don't claim to have a crystal ball, but I do wonder where all the extra electricity is going to come from. Electric cars are free of exhaust emissions, but most electric generation is not. Many electric cars will be charged overnight when there won't be any solar electric generation.

Another concern (there are many) is that while the car companies are moving toward electrics, they are cutting production of small cars in favor of SUVs. Gasolene is still relatively cheap, so people will continue to avoid the most fuel efficient vehicles. It doesn't seem to me that the car companies ever try to sell efficiency, so maybe it isn't surprising. Where is this going? Are the car companies moving too fast or not fast enough?

In terms of the old car hobby, both Jaguar and Aston-Martin have announced programs to convert their classic models to full electric with bolt-in kits that leave the

conversion completely reversible. Maybe that is where all classic cars will end up except for those in museums.

So let's hope that we can save the world, but in the meantime start thinking about next MG driving season. We had better enjoy our cars while we can.
Chairman Bill

Anyone Got A Light?

Dave Quinn sent in this picture of his latest eBay acquisition with this note:

Good seeing everyone at the Christmas party. I thought you might want to show this in its complete form for a future AA. This is what the Shields Fifth Avenue MGA table top cigarette lighter looks like with all its parts in place.

Dave Quinn



A Starter Classic?

Andy Hoffman sends in a link on Facebook about "An 'everyman' roadster, the **MG Midget** is the perfect starter classic" to buy when starting out to enjoy a classic MG. From Hagerty newsletter: https://www.hagerty.com/articles-videos/articles/2018/11/30/mg-midget-perfect-starter-classic?utm_source=SFMC&utm_medium=email&utm_content=18_November_28_HagertyNews_Engaged&fbclid=IwAR0OchMONUNzhA61LVcyhLwmB Da88giC9K5G01yc39M9N7y8nvw875Sd-8



GT-43 and all the wonderful activities with friends is in the rearview mirror, and GT-44 is still over the horizon; but it is not too soon to be thinking about plans for next summer. The 2019 GT will be in July from the 10th to the 14th.

We at the **Minnesota MG Vintage Racers (MMGVR)** have been working with the NAMGAR Board and the City of Dubuque to bring you a GT you will long remember. While we don't have everything nailed down yet, we

do have some exciting news to share as our plans begin to take shape.

The featured car next year is going to be the MG racecar. It has never been featured at a GT; but considering how many MGAs have been circling racetracks and taking home trophies over the years, it is time. We want to send a special invitation to all current and former MG race drivers to join us in Dubuque. Keeping with the race theme, our guest for the week will be David Hobbs. For over three decades, Hobbs had a distinguished driving career in everything from sports cars to NASCAR to Formula 1. He has also spent many years as a race commentator for NBC. We will have a special tie in to the Vintage Race Festival at Road America in Elkhart Lake, Wisconsin the following week, but more on that later.

GT-44 Hosting Committee



Flash Your Badge

Regalia Chairman, Bruce Mann, earlier sent out a notice on our new Rowdie MGA Club badges available from our website. These are very good quality and the detail is excellent, so you can now let everyone know you are a member of *Namgar's First*



and Finest MGA regional club. They are available under regalia, and now come *with* the included badge bar clips so you won't need to source these separately. Priced at \$44 in paper bills or coin of the realm. Get 'em now while they last!

Regalia Chairman, Bruce Mann

Christmas Gifts

So you finally got that brand new set of wire wheels for Christmas that you've been asking for all these years, eh Bunky? And now you have to decide what to do with that old set of 48 spokes that were hot forged in jolly old England in 1955 and wobble just a bit going down the road? And you want to see if any of the hubs are good enough to at least use for a spare tire in an emergency. Or, if not, are you worried you may have to deep 6 'em in your neighbor's back yard at midnight? Is that what's keeping you up at night, eh Bunky?

Well, worry no more my friend, because here's a tech tip from your old buddy discerning Dave Quinn to tell you how to check those old wheels and see if they're likely to head off into outer space the next time you make a hard left on those country lanes you so like to go speeding down.

Dave sent this in to Barney Gaylord's website in August 2017, but the advice should be as good today as it was in 1955 or I'm not your uncle's Monkey. Turns out that when it comes to wheel splines and their condition, being the sharpest tool in the shed *isn't* what you want. Dull and rounded wins every time in the battle of the twirling tires vs the spinning spindle. For if those little teeth decide to no longer retain that Rudge wheel, you'll quickly find that you ain't going nowhere my friend, as your axle spins spuriously and your wheels wait worriedly for something to grab onto.

So here's the tip to test your wheels. Get a vernier caliper and measure the diameter across those little tiny teeth and compare them to this little chart:

New part: 2.450"
Good part: 2.440"
Operative: 2.430"
Borderline: 2.425"
Dangerous: 2.410"

Dave recommends taking the average of four measurements on each hub as you can sometimes find flat spots. Examples shown below:



Bad: Hub spline very badly worn - skewed flank and sharp apex.



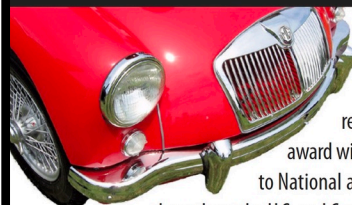
Better: Hub spline moderately worn - but still rounded on the apex.



Best: Teeth showing no wear, and with blunt tips



Register Your MGA With NAMGAR!



Join over 2,000 enthusiastic owners in the restoration, preservation, and sheer enjoyment of driving an MGA, Magnette, or variant of this noble breed. You'll receive six bi-monthly issues of *MGA!*, our full-color, award winning magazine, invitations to National and Regional Get-Togethers throughout the U.S. and Canada, plus a knowledge base and support group second to none. All this for just \$37.50 per year (North America), or \$52.50 (International). **Get more information at** <http://www.namgar.com>, or contact registrar@namgar.com.



Save the Date: GT-44

NAMGAR has announced the location and dates for **GT-44**. This annual event, which will be organized by the Minnesota MG Vintage Racers, will be held in the historic town of Dubuque, Iowa, from **July 10-14, 2019**.

Located on the banks of the Mississippi River, Dubuque offers visitors breathtaking views, award-winning restaurants, charming shops, art and river history museum, elegant turn-of-the-century homes, etc.

Check namgar.com for updates on this event later this year.



ROWDIES 2018 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

2019

Feb

16 Rowdie Business Meeting
at Buddies Grill, Holt, MI 12-4pm
Host: Dave & Chari Smith

See the Rowdies calendar page also for details about meets:

<http://www.mg-cars.org.uk/michiganrowdies/calendar.htm>

Michigan Rowdies

The first chapter of NAMGAR, the North American MGA Register.

"It's the cars that get you there, but the people keep you coming back."

Learn more at www.mg-cars.org.uk/michiganrowdies/





Rowdies!

The "Business Meeting" for the 2019 driving season has been organized by our faithful MGA #49 Racer, Dave Smith.

The location will be at: **Buddie's Grille**
2040 Aurelius
Holt, Michigan

The Date: **Saturday, February 16th, 2019**

The time will be from: **12:00 noon to 4:00 pm**

As at Christmas, the club will be providing the meal, a Luncheon Buffet of assorted sandwiches w/mashed potato and house salad. Cash bar for pop and alcohol.

Per Dave: Rowdies "**MUST RSVP**" as buffet service is on a per plate order. NO RSVP means no buffet food. If members do not want the above buffet, they still must let me know they are coming, but indicate they will order a meal on their own. This will get them seating at the buffet table and they can order off the menu with their server."

The final person count and buffet order **must be called or e-mailed to Dave by Thursday, 1-31-2019.**

Dave or Chari Smith: (517)694-4856 / email: Mgaracer49@gmail.com

This is the annual get together where you, the membership, can suggest outings for the club, volunteer for "day in the garage" events, suggest a color scheme for the boat I'll be building, and voice your approval for the club in general.

Plan to be at this important meeting!

John, Meets Chairman



*Captain
John's New
Boat*

CHAIRMAN'S CHATTER

by Bill Weakley



Here we are in the depth of winter. Well technically it just turned winter today, December 21, and it hasn't been very wintry. But it sure is dark. We started off the dark season with a fun party at the Chelsea Depot. I think everyone had a good time, and I even ended up with a present that I needed, a battery

charger/maintainer. One of mine died last year. Of course, I had tried to keep a different present, a very nice MG flag, but some Rowdie person stole it away from me. Oh well, the battery charger is already in use.

So far, I am feeling good about the winter. I am

spending a lot of time in my heated garage. I have projects going on all three MGs. The biggest is the replacement of piston rings in the A. After 1,000 miles the blowby was still

unacceptable and embarrassing. So I pulled the engine and took the block back to the shop for them to source the rings and replace them. They lightly honed the cylinders, checked over everything and cleaned it up for a very reasonable fee. I just picked it up today and should have it running in January. Keep your fingers crossed that this fixes the blowby problem. If it is fixed, I should be able to better assess the rear crankshaft seal. But that won't happen until I can put some miles on it.



I completed a trailer hitch for the A to go with a motorcycle trailer that I picked up from a friend of a friend. The trailer has never been used, but it is 35 years old, so the tires will have to go. I used Barney Gaylord's hitch plan but modified it so I wouldn't have to



weld to the bumper brackets. I like the fact that the bar that holds the ball is removable, so the rest of the hitch is hidden. I also had to modify the trailer tongue and wiring.

Other than the tires, it is all set to go to Dubuque.

I plan to make a hitch for the C also. It will have to be different than the one for the A, since there is no space behind the gas tank to hide the



main support. I have been studying info on the MG Experience web site. Many people have made hitches. There is one available to buy in England for rubber bumper Bs.

I should mention that I had a problem with my Eastwood 135 MIG welder that is about a year and a half old. When I contacted Eastwood for help, they responded right away. They told me how to check out the drive motor. When that checked out OK, I told them I thought the potentiometer that controls the wire speed was bad. They sent me two, and that fixed it. I have had two problems with Eastwood items, and in both cases, they responded quickly and generously. I am very pleased with their customer service.

Another of my winter projects is to recover the seats for my Midget. I bought the foam and covers from Moss. I was surprised that there were no instructions. I checked the web site where they often have additional information and then emailed them. Turns out they don't have instructions. They sent me instructions for an Austin-Healey seat which isn't of much use. So I am making it up as I go. When I recovered the Miata seats for my C, I was impressed with the way the kit was made so the in-between seams could be pulled in to give it a very professional look. I gather with the Midget seats that one is expected to glue the center portions of the covers to the foam. I am hoping to improve on that. Time will tell.

I completed one little project. That was to raise the shoulder belt retractors in the C. When I had a fold-away top, the retractors had to be below the folded top. Since I converted to a stow-away top, as the car was originally, I could raise the mounting point closer to shoulder height. This required making a new back wall cover. While I had the top off, I decided to have the bows powder coated. I am very happy with the powder coating on the A top bows. They get banged around so much that the more durable powder coating should keep them looking good longer.

Even though I am feeling good about making good use of the winter, we are going to escape to Florida for a week in January and to Gulf Shores, AL in February. We will be at the business meeting February 16 and hope to see many of you there. Look for details elsewhere in this issue.

"The Last Driving Day"

A Report by John Alexander

Here is a story of three intrepid MGA-teers who undertook a late-in-the-season drive for lunch and libation only to find cold conditions and elusive pubs into which to crawl.

Kevin Peck, Bill Weakley and I took advantage of a cloudy but "mild" Monday Nov. 5th to air out the interiors of our MGA's on a venture to the roads of the Irish Hills. We were seeking the friendly warmth of Jerry's Pub of which we "sort'a" knew the location. We met to the west of Ann Arbor at the corner of Zeeb and Jackson Rd where civilian people gathered to snap photos of us and our little British car show. (I wish the Queen had been with us!) We discussed the potential route to Jerry's and blasted off to the Hills, travelling through Manchester on our way west, Kevin in the lead. The traffic was light, the air bracing. A nice relaxing drive.

Down this little residential/vacation home dead end road we drove, past residents raking leaves and doing end-of-season stuff. At the end, sure enough, was Jerry's. Close examination revealed that they were closed Sunday and Monday for the winter. "But it's only just November!". Bill had his GPS fired up and knew of another bar so he took the lead as we back tracked up the way we had come, past the now waving residents who knew why we were leaving their happy valley.

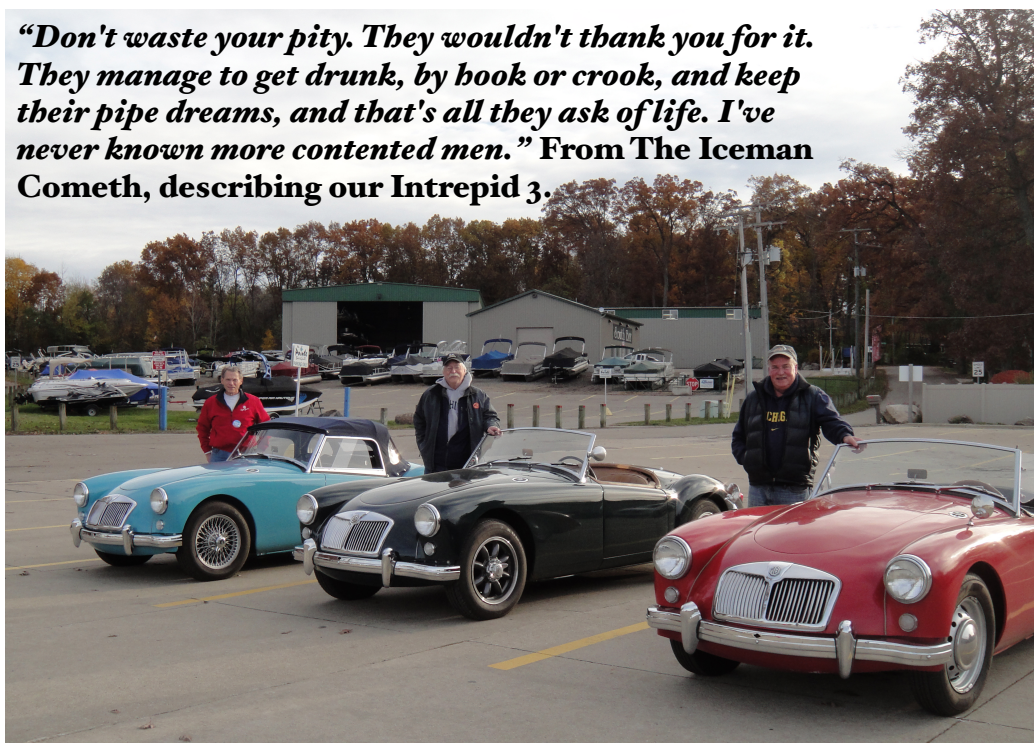
More nice roads, but the air seemed a leetle more chillier to me. We turned into another residential road and encountered Pub Number Two which looked familiar to me - Clark Lake's "Beach Bar". Oh, Yeah. I'd been there three or four years ago, in the summer - when it's warm. The bar was closed for the winter - in November! Bill

said "Not to worry. I know of another bar just around the corner." Note: Bill knows the locations of lots of bars!

We roared out of that car park on to the next venue which was, indeed, just around the lake from the Beach Bar. As we approached "The Point's" EMPTY lot, things looked bleak and, speaking for myself, I was getting hungry as well as thirsty, to say nothing about being over-cooled! Fortunately, there was a sign which welcomed us inside. There were no customers but a wait staff that was very attentive. We had a really nice lunch! Outside once again, as we readied our chargers for the

journey home, a lady came over from one of the nearby houses and happily revealed that she had owned a '58 MGA back in 1964 but it eventually needed too much work to keep it on the road so they parted ways. Sometimes it seems that everyone

"Don't waste your pity. They wouldn't thank you for it. They manage to get drunk, by hook or crook, and keep their pipe dreams, and that's all they ask of life. I've never known more contented men." From The Iceman Cometh, describing our Intrepid 3.



has owned an MGA at least once!

We returned to the seemingly colder Ann Arbor area by a different route and my odometer indicated our round trip mileage to be 89.6 miles. Not a bad little drive to end the season. I'd better get that Pneumonia Shot.

***Your intrepid reporter,
John "the Iceman Cometh" Alexander
(from his sick bed)***

(Ed note: See above quote from Eugene O'Neil's "The Iceman Cometh" which was obviously written expressly for our Triumphant Trio.)

Upgrading Magnette Mechanicals

From May 2005 issue of Classic Motorsports



While the Magnette's little 1489cc B-series engine has powered many a race-winning MGA, it's still on the small side for moving a weighty sedan. Luckily, the B-series was very long-lived, and a bigger, 1.8-liter example powered half a million MGBs, along with a few other cars. A stock MGB-spec 1798cc engine puts out about 95 horsepower, which is an instant 40 percent jump over the stock Magnette engine.

Early three-bearing MGB engines are much closer to the Magnette's 1.5-liter unit, and would be an easier swap, but they're also harder to find, less durable and more costly than the later five-bearing block used after 1966. Either way, the sump is at opposite ends on the Magnette and B. On a three-bearing engine, the sump and oil pickup can be swapped. On the five-bearing engine, further mods are needed to the oil pan, oil pump and starter.

First off, the MGB starter solenoid is going to bump into the Magnette's steering column unless it's rotated out of the way. A new mounting hole needs to be drilled into the engine backplate to keep everything in place. To sort out the oil pan, you'll need to mate the MGB oil pan mounting flange to the Magnette sump to sort out the different bolt patterns, and the Magnette oil pickup will have to be welded up to the B's oil pump. Oil dipstick tubes may also have to be relocated.

That's the hard part. For intake manifolds, you've got your choice: You can keep the Magnette's lovely casting, go for the period-correct MGA one, or just use the simple and functional MGB part. Exhaust manifolds offer similar choices. Of course, once the 1.8-liter engine is in, the possibilities are almost

endless. Pulling 160 horsepower out of a street B engine isn't unheard of. (See the May 2002 issue of *Grassroots Motorsports* for more details.)

For transmissions, the early B (through 1967) gearbox is a pretty easy swap, but it has no synchro on first, and a huge gap between second and third. The later, full-synchro gearbox can fit with some transmission tunnel surgery. Both are available with overdrive, but cost a good bit more. ZA Magnettes were fitted with a 4.875:1 differential ratio, and the ZB was fitted with a more usable 4.55:1. Other ratios (and axles) are available from MGAs and early MGBs.

For cooling, the stock radiator can handle the job, although having it recored and adding a six-blade fan from an MGA or MGB isn't a bad idea. While you're raiding the parts MGB, grab the radiator overflow tank and oil cooler and hook them up. And the alternator.

Brakes on a Magnette are adequate, barely, but MGA discs can work, if you're motivated enough. MGB discs may also work, with some effort. In short, there are tons of go-fast goodies for the Magnette, they're just usually found on MGAs and MGBs.

Ed note: This article is a tribute to Allen Bachelder, Larry Pittman, and any others considering adding an MG Magnette to their stables in the future. And they haven't even mentioned air-conditioning yet!

The Year of the 5 time Champions

It was an exciting year for motor racing all over the globe. From the top ranks of Formula One down to the fast growing battles in Vintage racing and everything in between.

Championships are difficult to win, hard fought and when you get one, it is cherished forever. Schumacher destroyed Formula One with 7 Championships, Richard, Dale and Jimmy won 7 NASCAR Championships and Foyt still tops Indy cars history.

While others have won more championships in all these categories, they are few and far between. This year we at the **Motorsports Press Agency** want to acknowledge a feat that may never have happened in Motorsport. Today, in Mexico, we have three 5-time Champions all in the same year. Lewis Hamilton in F1, Scott Dixon in Indy Car and **Dave Nicholas in SVRA**.

Who? You ask is Dave Nicholas and what is SVRA? It is the **Sportscar Vintage Racing Association** and over the past decade has brought Vintage Racing up to a status that many race series envy. Tony Parella, the owner of SVRA, has taken Vintage racing to the Indianapolis Speedway, Sebring International, Watkins Glen, Mid-Ohio, Road America and Road Atlanta, Sonoma, Portland and even Circuit of the Americas and is adding Laguna Seca and Lime Rock in 2019. Fields at SVRA races sometimes exceed 500 vintage cars from pre-war to the current Trans-Am series which hosts several of its events on vintage weekends.

Nicholas, 76 years young, is a long time SCCA and IMSA competitor who returned to racing in 2013 with a 1960 MGA. "It wasn't planned, but in 1963 I started in an MGA and damned if 50 years later I returned to my roots". On the way he won the U2.5 Camel GT drivers championship, spent a season on short tracks in NASCAR modifieds, taught SCCA and BMWCCA drivers schools and raced what he could. "I thought my racing days were over, but when my daughter finished college at USC I told her I was taking the money I spent

annually for her tuition and was going racing. It was probably the best decision I ever made".

Why do we pick Dave Nicholas to sit alongside Lewis and Scott? Because **as a one man team with a great part time mechanic to maintain the car they won the SVRA Group championship in 2013, 2015, 2016, 2017 and again this year.** With a budget most people spend on tires. "Kevin (Richards) works hard keeping

the car prepared, I work with him, we show up ready to race and I drive the wheels off it". His winning percentage since returning to racing has been 44.5% "nearly Fangio like" he smiles.

Hamilton agreed the record was something, "I'd just hope to be active and enjoying life at 76 much less bouncing

over curbs and winning races. I'd love to shake his hand." Dixon agreed, "I looked at some of the videos of Dave and some photos and that old guy would scare me if somebody put him in an Indy car. He is bloody fast".

So here is to 3 worthy racers who in 2018 won their 5th Championships. May they win a bunch more.



Rowdie Christmas Party Report

December 2, 2018 was not necessarily one of the nicest days that we have had this winter, but it was filled with joy and camaraderie inside the Chelsea Depot at 1pm that afternoon as the Rowdies celebrated their annual Christmas Party and gift exchange with 41 members in attendance. Sharing the warmth of the holiday season were Dave & Chari Smith, Carolyn King & John Alexander, Bill & MaryEllen Weakley, John & Gigi Somers, Curt & Stephanie Smith, Mac & Joni McDonnell, Tom Fant & Lynn, Gary & Diana Cunningham, Todd & Connie Binsz, Tracey & Gordie Bird, Norma Meyers & Kevin Peck, Andy Hoffman & Joan, Bruce & Willy Mann, Mitzi & Larry Pittman, Janice & Lloyd Herring, Dave & Phyllis Goeddecke, Kathy & Ken Nelson, Bruce Nichols, Brian Beery, Jeff Smith, Dave & Donna Quinn, Steve Holliday, and John

two MGs-Tom Fant's MGB and Bill & MaryEllen's MGC. MGAs were present in spirit only, due to an absence of Global Warming on that day. Appetizers and liquid potions helped get the spirits Jolly, and everyone had a chance to catch up on old times before settling into a bounteous feast to satisfy even the heartiest of appetites.

Of course, during the pre-dinner socializing time a certain amount of package shaking and evaluating had been going on, as most people in the group tried to tell which of the many gift packages might hold some treasure for an MGA in the upcoming year, or some other pleasing do-dad to adorn the owner or their house perhaps. Chairman Bill managed the gift disseminating in true Rowdie fashion, making sure the rules were all adhered to. Two prizes were especially favored this year



McMullan. This year the board of officers decided to try something new with the club paying the entire cost of the meal. We heard no complaints from members insisting to pay their own way.

The food was good and the Christmas decorating was festive. All the arrangements had been made by our talented team of Kevin Peck & Norma Meyers, Jeff & Debbie Smith, and John Alexander & Carolyn King. Kudos to them all.

Rowdies came from near and far to attend, and the parking area was even graced with the presence of

based on the multitude of temporary owners possessing them briefly until the last number was called. These were an MG scarf for top-down December driving, and a black MG "Super Cape" allowing the possessor to fix broken down MGAs with the "speed of a burning Lucas candle." See cover picture for a demonstration.

Chairman Bill and Dave Smith also announced Feb 16, 2019 as the date for the Rowdie Business Meet at Buddies Grill in Holt, MI so mark your calendars. After some cleaning up was accomplished, we all headed home after another fabulous Rowdie gathering!



1st Row: Todd & Connie Binsz, Tracy Bird & Mary Ellen Weakley, Diane & Gary Cunningham
2nd Row: Norma Meyers, John & Gigi Somers, Andy Hoffman & Joan,
3rd Row: Lynn & Tom Fant, Carolyn King & John Alexander, Bruce & Willy Mann
4th Row: Mitzi & Larry Pittman, Mac & Joni McDonnell, Janice & Lloyd Herring

Report by Ken Nelson
Pictures by Mac
McDonnell, Bill Weakley,
Ken Nelson.



1st Row: Larry Pittman & Chairman Bill; Dave & Phyllis Goeddeke; Tracey & Gordy Bird
2nd Row: Curt & Stephanie Smith; Kathy & Ken Nelson; Kevin Peck & Norma Meyers
3rd Row: Bruce Nichols, Brian Beery; Curt & Dave & Kevin; Gary Cunningham & Larry
4th Row: Jeff Smith & Mac; Dave Quinn; Dave & Chari Smith, John & Gigi Somers

VAPOR-LOCK DISCUSSION



*For several years now I've been experiencing vapor-lock on hot humid days. It is always an issue when I am stuck in city traffic or after stopping to fill up with gas. I know its a rather common complaint about MGAs but the past few years I've experienced a lot more than my fellow travelers. I've been planning to send my carbs in for a rebuild since I've logged 48,000 miles since Dave Smith's rebuilt including re-shafting. I use the good original Grosse jets. I came across the attached article that says the solution in older cars for vapor-lock is higher fuel pressure and asked some Rowdies for their thoughts. **Dave Quinn, Dec. 2018***

STUCK CABLES AND GASEOUS GAS

It's good to know how fast you're going. And if you'll get there.

MANY OF THE MECHANICAL ISSUES

that vex us are auto independent, which is to say, universal. This month, I decided to tackle two of them.

Hagerty member Gary Linsky writes: *I am the original owner of a 1976 BMW 530i. The speedometer has a twitch in the indicator needle at low speeds that I attribute to gummed-up lubrication of the speedo cable. I've read warnings about lubricants walking or wicking up the cable to the speedo head, a condition to be avoided.*

Both *Hemmings* and *The Garage Journal* recommend lubricating speedo cables with a spray can of white lithium grease, and I concur. It's heavy enough that it stays in place and doesn't run out the bottom end of the cable. Some posters report success with silicone or graphite, but graphite seems a little light to me. If you're going to use lithium, I wouldn't worry about cleaning old lubricant out first, but if you're concerned about it, you could spray brake cleaner in one end and out the other. Be sure to blow

it out with compressed air before introducing fresh grease so it doesn't cut it. If you're using graphite, though, I would clean it out first. And even though this isn't one of your symptoms, if a speedometer cable will barely turn, you could first try to work it free with a penetrating oil such as SiliKroil, followed by lubrication.

Hagerty member Victor Witman writes: *I have a 1948 Pontiac Silver Streak. It has a straight-eight engine, a six-volt electrical system, and an automatic transmission. In 2010, I had the engine and carburetor rebuilt. Now, on hot days, when the engine is hot and idles for a time, the car will run like it is out of gas, sputtering and then shutting off. It is hard to restart, and if it does, as soon as I put it in gear and try to move, it will shut off. After I let the engine cool down, it will start up and run like normal. I did not have this problem before the rebuild.*

You describe textbook vapor-lock symptoms, which are caused by fuel in the line turning into a vapor before it can reach and

fill the carburetor's float bowl. The exact mechanism is referred to as "vaporizing" or "boiling." These are two slightly different phenomena, but the result is the same—no liquid gasoline in the carb. Hot weather and high underhood temperatures create the problem, which is exacerbated by anemic engine-mounted mechanical fuel pumps that pull the fuel at a low pressure from the tank. If you want to be certain, you could temporarily replace the gas line into the carburetor with a transparent one and watch as the fuel goes from a liquid state to a gaseous one. It's possible that a fuel line is now routed closer to the hot engine than it was before the rebuild. You can try moving the fuel line or encasing it in a reflective sheath, but the long-term cure for vapor lock is higher fuel pressure, and the way to achieve that is with an electric fuel pump, mounted close to the fuel tank, that pushes rather than pulls the fuel. There are many six-volt fuel pumps, but the cleanest way to do this is with an in-tank pump. Tanks, Inc., sells an in-tank pump for your car, but it's 12-volt, and your car is six-volt. I spoke with Tanks, and the company said it could sell you the flange and pick-up tube, and you could connect a generic six-volt submersible pump to it. Tanks would be happy to discuss the specifics with you: **TanksInc.com, 877-596-3842. //**

See our fellow Rowdies' responses on the following pages

Mark Barnhart: The higher fuel pressure would help some, but go too high and the pressure could blow past the jet flooding the engine. The best method on our MGs is to be sure to have the fuel line routed as far as possible from heat sources and be sure the heat shield, gaskets, and black plastic heat insulators under the carbs are in good condition. Adding one additional black heat insulator under each carb might help. Also make sure the timing is correct. Timing can effect how hot an engine runs. Another thing to check that effects heat is how well the radiator support is sealed up the way the factory intended.

John Alexander: I concur with Mark's assessment. Just getting up to 4 pounds pressure can flood the jets if there is the slightest crapola in the needle and seat (or GrosseJet). I can state that on having lived the gasoline dream with the race car! I think the ethanol in our new fuels boils at a lower temp so the fix is to cool it as much as possible. I installed an Attwood Bilge Blower in the carb side radiator shroud 4" pipe and angled it to blow on the front carb reservoir. When I notice the engine beginning to falter at idle or inching along in heavy traffic, flipping the switch blows cool (relatively) air from in front of the radiator onto the carbs and within 30 seconds the burbling ceases and all is well again. Works after stopping in hot weather as well. Also check the timing.

Dave Smith: I did notice in the PDF that the author mentioned reflective covering on the fuel lines. This product is available at Lane Automotive and likely other race parts vendors. I am also interested in John's comments on the boiling point of ethanol fuel. Perhaps a interesting test would be aircraft fuel or non ethanol fuel in very warm weather. Both are available if you purchase in 5 gallon cans. Mark B also mentioned the blocking off of openings in the radiator surround. Dave mentioned that he ducts air from the left 4.5 inch opening to the carbs. I believe that is important. Would it also help engine cooling if a 4.5 inch hose went from the grill and then back to the 4.5 inch opening. I believe the factory added the front tube to keep air pressure airflow thru the radiator. #49 never had vapor lock on red flag stops on the track. Track (asphalt) temps over 120 degrees and air temps in the 90s. Certainly not street driving conditions but still a big heat soak on the induction system. I did use the shielded covering on the fuel lines, a single carb spacer and a Moss Heat shield painted with aluminum reflective paint. Fuel pressure was 3.5 psi. Coolant temp was never above 210 with the

Davis aluminum radiator and a blanking sleeve in lieu of a thermostat. One concern with the Bilge blower is amperage draw. Most blower motors pull 10 or more amps. Race cars need a 50 amp alternator to power up the Hi energy ignition, twin fuel pumps and the radiator fan etc. It could be an issue with a Lucas Generator or even a street alternator. Also the wiring would need to be separate from the Lucas loom.

Dave Quinn: I like the bilge blower idea. I see Barney Gaylord uses one and likes it as well. All these years and still learning new things. As I recall Curt did the double black spacer approach. I know I thought about doing that and now I can't recall why I did not; probably thinking when I get a-round-2-it! Timing is good; installed a new Pertronix distributor & coil last fall. Radiator works fine (3-row style); no coolant overflow running 50/50 even when at idle and temp gauge is past 230. New temp gauge reads 8° high per boiling water test & inferred tester. Heat shield and gaskets all good; I've swung float bowls as far from the heat shield as possible. I have the 4.5" air ducts installed as original ahead of the carbs. I've thoroughly cleaned the carbs, bowls, linkage, and lubed. John, I was wondering if the blower might not restrict air when not in use?

John Alexander: The bilge blower draws 2.6 amps, pushes 100 CFM and I only turn it on when the engine begins to falter from vapor lock. It sounds like a turbo! The blades do not much hinder the flow of air as they free wheel when not operating. Read about the installation on Barney's website. It's very simple. To run on ethanol laced fuel after using non-ethanol gas, the carb mixture needs to be a bit richer. There's much more energy in gasoline than there is in alcohol and the boiling point of alcohol (ethanol) is lower, so when the engine compartment temps rise when air movement through the grille is at it's slowest, the alcohol percolates in the carb reservoirs. That's the point when I turn on the blower and within a minute the VL conditions stop. The blower moves the exh. manifold heat away from the carb reservoir. I wouldn't use Avgas as a test fuel for two reasons. It has lead in the mix like our old gasoline but at a higher %age. It also contains acetone which is there to inhibit icing at high altitudes. really not good for rubber parts. Like Dave says, try a thermostat blanking sleeve in place of the t-stat. That forces more coolant thru the radiator.

Bruce Mann: I read all the reports, and found them interesting. My take on this since I don't have

that problem. And believe me, I was driving in temps that were 90 plus and many hills in the south to GT43 last year. I think the 70-30 water mix in the radiator helps with cooling. I think timing is critical. I static time my cars a few times per year, just to check it. I think carbs and carb sync is a big factor. I think the engine runs better with high test as well. I do not run with the big 4.5 inch tube, and maybe the carbs get more air, who knows. The td is the worst of the two, with the fuel pump up front and carbs right on top of manifold, I find I have to open hood for a while when we stop, sure helps with cool down. I would definitely rebuild carbs since it has been so long.

Bruce Mann: Bruce Mann reports running 70 % distilled water in lieu of 50% dropped the running temp 10 degrees.

Bruce offered the following advice from the MGTF club discussion:

Tony Rizzello: For a year now I have been dealing with vapor lock on my 1955 MGTF 1500. I understand that the design of the carburetors over the exhaust manifold is why these cars have a tendency to develop vapor lock while idling in hot weather and after sitting for a while after a good run. I don't have any problem while driving. In fact, the cars runs great. All engine specs are on target (valve clearance .12, timing 8° BTDC, and lambda (air fuel ratio) at .98). I have tried the common sense approaches such as making sure the heat reducing blocks between the carbs and the intake are properly installed. That the fuel lines are not touching the exhaust pipe or manifold (although you can't completely eliminate their proximity). I have tried the uncommon approaches such as installing a heat shield between the carbs and the heat reducing blocks. I changed over the radiator fan from the metal four blade to the plastic seven blade in increase air flow over the engine area. Nothing has stopped the vapor lock. The fuel pump is mounted in the rear near the gas tank to eliminate it from being affected. The fuel lines that run above the carbs are coated with a cloth that reduces heat transfer. One other item I should mention, the carbs are new and were set up properly by a top notch professional. I can attest that the idle and driving are great so they seem to be functioning properly. What am I missing?

Don (TSO Tech Editor): Hi Tony! Looks like you have done all the right things to try to prevent vapor lock from ruining your day.....except one. Many of our members have

installed an auxiliary fuel pump in the line to turn on when the vapor lock occurs. This additional boost will overcome the pressure build up and block caused by the vapor lock. A small solid-state pump can be hidden under the car with a switch under the dash to toggle on when you need it. It's also nice when your SU pump decides to call it a day. A back up! They work because they are not a mechanical pump, like an SU.

A mechanical SU pump sucks fuel from the tank where a solid state pump creates pressure in the fuel line. The coil in the SU pump is activated by the points under the cap, a solid state uses a transistor to activate the coil. The solid-state pump runs all the time and is a little noisy so an insulating kit can be fabricated if not supplied with the pump. Splice it into the existing fuel line along the frame someplace. You can get a low pressure one and activate it when you are having vapor lock issues. Once it clears you can switch it back off. There is a relief valve in the solid-state pump so it will not over pressure the line.

Tony Rizzello: First I want to report the additional installation of a solid state fuel pump in line with my mechanical fuel pump solved my vapor lock issue.

Dave Quinn: Rowdies may recall Mark Barnhart's recommendation in August 2018 on sold state fuel pumps:

I just received a flyer from Moss motors advertising a "Lucas" branded Fuel Pump for \$99.99. I have been using these pumps for over fifteen years. It is a rotary vain solid-state pump. I buy them at Auto Zone for around \$55.00 each. They are made by Airtex, Model Number E8016S and they are the correct pressure for our MG's. They have powered Dave Smiths #49 racecar for 20 years. They are great pumps for the price if you buy them at Auto Zone and if you should have a problem with one the next Auto Zone is right around the corner and with no shipping charge either. Mark confirmed that the kits he buys include all the mounting and connection hardware as they do at Moss (or LBC).

Bruce Mann: Tom Ball sells both style fuel pumps, original style Lucas electric and sold-state electronic, both with the proper pressure for our MGAs.

Recap of suggestions

- * Ensure the timing is correct
- * Route fuel line as far as possible from heat sources and consider adding racer's reflective covering

on the lines

- * Ensure the heat shield, gaskets, and black spacers are in good condition and make sure the jets, needle and seats are clean and the carbs in sync. Consider adding an additional black spacer under each carb. Consider painting the heat shield with aluminum reflective paint.

- * Ensure the radiator surrounds are sealed well as the factory intended, and run the air duct to the grill per the factory.

- * Install an Attwood Bilge Blower in the air duct to deflect exhaust manifold heat

- * Use a blanking sleeve in lieu of a thermostat

- * Coolant mix of 70% distilled water, rather than 50/50

- * Use high-test gasoline

- * Add an auxiliary solid-state fuel pump to turn on when the vapor lock occurs plus suggestions on buying these pumps

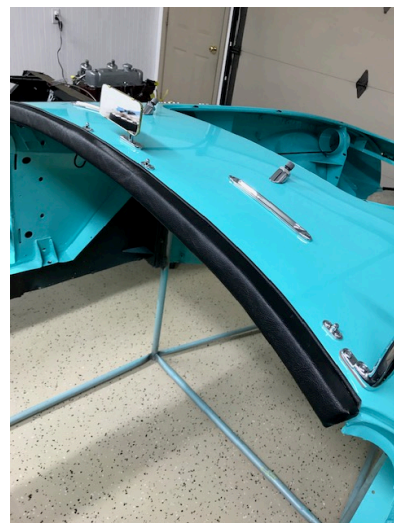
Your Editor Comments:

Thank you Dave-very nice summary and will go in the Antics. You can buy the Airtex E8016S fuel pumps online

at several places for as little as \$31-35 with free shipping, (and knockoffs that look identical for \$15-25 even). I have those on both my TD and MGA as backups. Bruce Mann is right that the TD is worse for vapor lock than the MGA, and the only really good cure I've found is to open the bonnet for 10-15 minutes or so. I added a heat shield in the TD that didn't help, and there isn't enough room to put the black plastic spacers in the TD which probably would help quite a bit I think. I'm not sure that running 2 fuel pumps together helps greatly either. But either way, here's something you can use to help get you started on rebuilding your own carburetors when you get around to it.



A Few Pictures of Bruce Mann's Latest MGA Project



Technical

Most of you understand the basic mechanism of Lucas electrics and don't need this primer instruction text, but I thought a picture of the recharge injecting device, as well as the replacement part number (54953043) would be helpful. NOTE: This is for positive ground cars only!



Guidance



The Sir Joseph Lucas Theory Of Electricity

Positive grounding depends on proper circuit functioning, which is the transmission of negative ions by retention of the visible spectral manifestation known as "smoke". This has been referred to as the smoke theory because when the smoke comes out it's finished, cooked, or done for. Smoke is the thing that makes electrical circuits work. We know this to be true because every time one lets the smoke out of an electrical circuit, it stops working. This can be verified repeatedly through empirical testing.

For example, if one places a copper bar across the terminals of a battery, prodigious quantities of smoke are liberated and the battery shortly ceases to function. In addition, if one observes smoke escaping from an electrical component such as a Lucas voltage regulator, it will also be observed that the component no longer functions. The logic is elementary and inescapable!

The function of the wiring harness is to conduct the smoke from one device to another. When the wiring springs a leak and lets all the smoke out of the system, nothing works afterwards. Starter motors were considered unsuitable for British motorcycles for some time largely because they consumed large quantities of smoke, requiring very unsightly large wires. It has been reported that Lucas electrical components are possibly more prone to electrical leakage than their Bosch, Japanese or American counterparts. Experts point out that this is because Lucas is British, and all things British leak. British engines leak oil, British shock absorbers, hydraulic forks and disk brake systems leak fluid, British tyres leak air. Therefore, it follows that British electrical systems must leak smoke. Once again, the logic is clear and inescapable!



So, in conclusion, the basic concept of transmission of electrical energy in the form of smoke provides a logical explanation of the mysteries of electrical components, especially British units manufactured by Joseph Lucas, Ltd And remember: "A gentleman does not motor about after dark" (Sir Joseph Lucas, The Prince of Darkness, 1842-1903)

The Lucas motto: Get home before dark.

Lucas is the original patent holder for the Short Circuit.

Other notable Lucas Inventions:

Lucas - Inventor of the first intermittent wiper.

Lucas - Inventor of the self-dimming headlamp.

The three-position Lucas light switch--DIM, FLICKER and OFF.

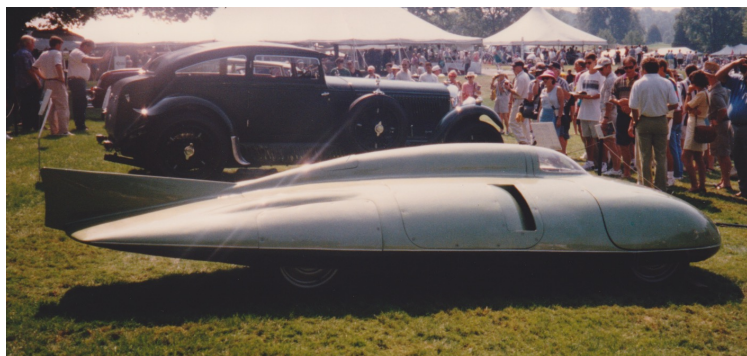
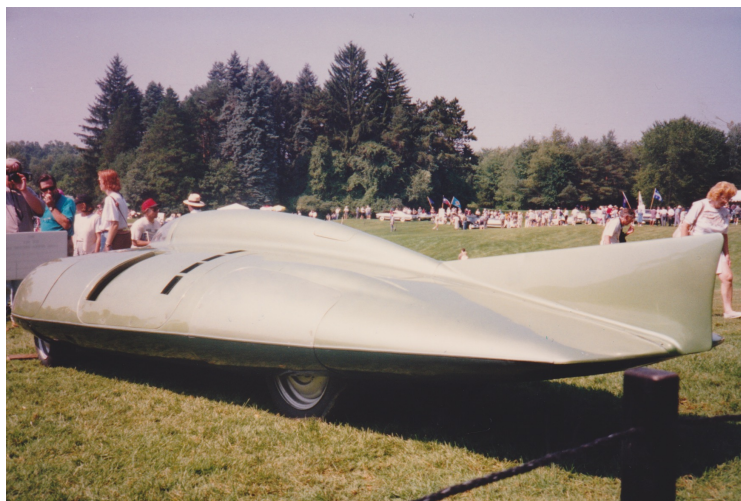
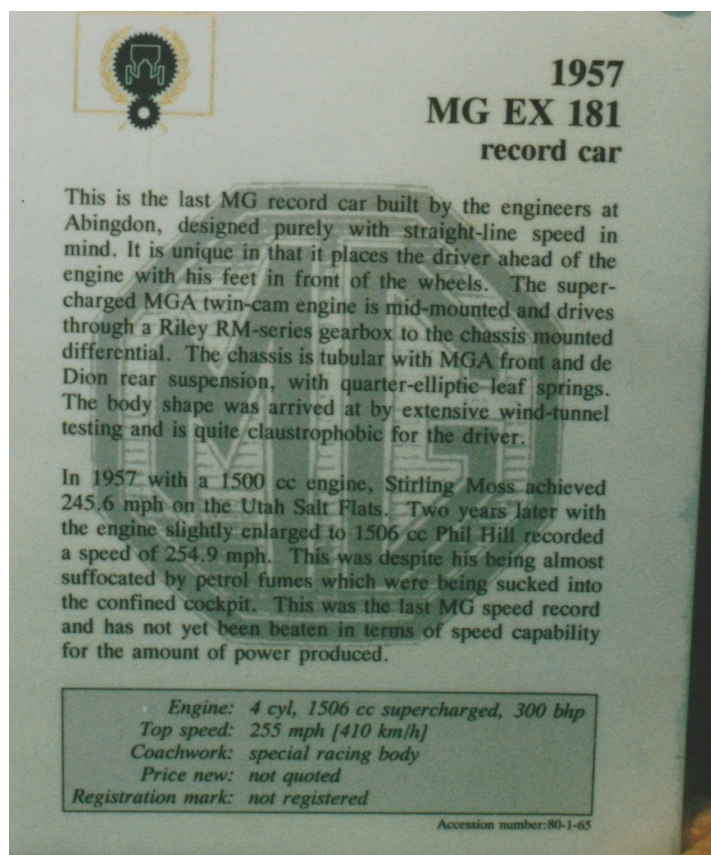
Lucas, Designer of the Ignition Switch--SMOKE, SMOULDER and IGNITE.

Hooray For Lucas Electrics-The Original Anti-theft device!



Memories From The Past

From Dave Quinn-Meadowbrook Concours 1996 with MG EX181



Dave Quinn wrote in "Don't know if you can use any of these but thought I'd pass them along. Best I recall, Mac (Spears) took them all. (Ed comment: Please note MG needed a Riley RM gearbox to win the day)

