

*A publication by and for the members of the
Flatwater Austin-Healey Club of Nebraska and Western Iowa*

**February 2008
Calendar:**

February 4 Monday
Officers meeting 7 P.M.
Location TBA

February 7, Thursday
Jackson's Pub, Gretna,
Hwy 6/31 6:30 p.m.

February 9, Saturday
Breakfast at Mahoney
State Park 9 a.m. or so.

February 29 Friday
Leap Year Fish at the
Double Down Bar in
Plattsmouth 6:30 P.M.

RSVP NOW!

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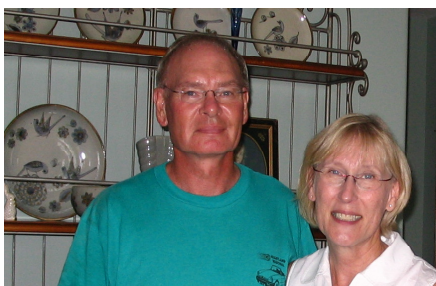
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Editors Note:

FAHC is honored to have one of its members, Brian Goldsmith, gain national recognition. The Brian we know is not a person who seeks the limelight. Brian would rather go about his business of playing with cars, enjoying the company of FAHC members and helping anyone when he can. When you talk to Brian about the award, he will deflect any personal recognition and point to the others who helped fix the Cook's car. That is what makes his recognition and the award so special. The award is not for a pretty car he built but for his concourse character. For Brian, it is just doing what Brian does.

Mike Cook, the recipient of Brian's help and nominator for the award, sent the following to me.



2007 Good Samaritan of the Year

Every year the North American MGB Registry of which our own club in a chapter, recognizes someone who has gone above and beyond to help another in connection with our LBC hobby. This year it has been awarded to Brian & Jane Goldsmith of Treynor, Iowa.

You may recollect that Sue and I we were traveling to MG2007 in California by way of Mt Rushmore and Yellowstone. Just outside Omaha NE the gearbox in the Silver Lady went kaput. Enter Brian Goldsmith. Not only did Brian trailer the car back to his workshop but he tracked down a new TR7 5 speed, negotiated a price and even collected it!. Helped take the V8 engine out, replace the box, bolt the complete power unit back into the car and send us on our way. In total it took approx 10 hours of actual "wrench time". While Brian was helping me, Jane was looking after Sue, I do believe some shopping was involved.

Brian & Jane not only crossed the road to help but put us back on the road. Both Sue and I will always be indebted to this great couple, they are truly Good Samaritans.

by Mike & Sue Cook

HOLIDAY PARTY A SUCCESS

Eighty-eight FAHC members filled a Misty's party room to celebrate a wrap-up of 2007 events and the kick off of the 2008 club event season. President Greg Lemon presented the 2007 Awards with the highlight being Brian Goldsmith's receipt of the NAMGBR Good Samaritan Award.

Brent and Kay Kasl did a superb job of organizing the event. The food was tasty and if you left hungry it was because you did not go back for seconds. The slide show that Kay built and set to music was a smashing success. The tune TR Man by the Spinal Tappets brought down the house. Dave Erickson made sure we had festive decorations and good door prizes.

AWARDS

Enthusiast of the Year (for greatest attendance at club events) Jim Danielson

Rookie Enthusiast of the Year (greatest attendance for a first year member) Steve Williams

Driver Award (most points at driving competition events) Terry Davis

NAMGBR Good Samaritan of the Year--Brian Goldsmith--Award from the National Club

Presidential Ponderings *by Greg Lemon*

Presidential Ponderings by Greg Lemon

Well I certainly hope all of you that could make it to the Holiday Party enjoyed yourself, I know I did. We have hunt down the link to "TR Man" (sung to the tune of the Beatles "Nowhere Man" but with Triumph, or pretty much any British car, appropriate lyrics) and put it on the website. I do want to thank Brent and Kay Kasl as well as my wife for all the help with the party. I tried to recognize and thank as many members as I could think of at the party, but I'm sure I missed a few, in mentioning the people that "do the work" for the club I think I forgot to mention our membership chair Gary Lien, and I am sure there are others as well.

Speaking of Gary Lien he has started to send the e-mail notices out on events rather than me. This is always a little bit of a challenge to get all e-mail addresses correct and current as well as getting through spam filters. E-mail notice of events are sent out on a regular basis, if you have gone a couple weeks without getting one let one of the officers (listed on the last page of the newsletter) know, be sure to include the e-mail address we want you to use and we will try to get it worked out.

I had my first auto body class last week at Southeast Community College, I was pleased to see four other FAHC members there besides me, and in fact we make up bulk of the class.

We have Fish starting up again this month, and the usual events as well, but February will probably be the quietest month of the year as far as FAHC events. It is never too early to start getting the car(s) ready for driving season. As I write this it has finally warmed up after what seemed like weeks of single digit temps. Makes you want to get out to the garage and start hammering on something.

TR MAN and other songs by the Spinal Tappets can be found at The Illinois Sports Owners Association web site using the following address.

<http://www.snic-baaapp.org/index.html>

Scroll down the page to find the Spinal Tappets link



**Susie Erickson
pulls a winning
door prize ticket**



PITSTOP *by Joe Kueper*

Recently I spoke with several members who did not come to activities because their cars were not working and just needed a little fixing here and there. These members were reluctant to trust their limited mechanical skills. When I look back at how little I knew when I got my first car I can understand their hesitation to "jump right in and start wrenching." I learned what I know through reading books and trial and error—lots of errors. I got better results by seeking out the help of guys who had experience and would show me how to fix things. Our club is rich with talent and those who have a willingness to share. You as members should not hesitate to ask them for help if you want to learn.

To this end I am dedicating February to helping any member who has a project involving welding and wants to come by while I replace sills, rocker panels and other rusty parts on my MGB-GT. I'll show you what I know about welding and help you with your project if we can squeeze it into my garage. The club even has an orphan welding unit that gets passed around and you can use for the cost of welding wire and argon gas. Cheap! Call me so we can talk about your project and we can schedule you in for week nights or weekends.

Read and enjoy, I'm heading to the garage. Join me.

FRIDAY NIGHT FISH ON THE ROAD AGAIN

By Editor Joe

The roving Fish Friday event was a great success for 2007 and the organizers have signed on for another year. This event grew out of need to find a meeting place to replace one used in previous years. The idea of going to a different location each month has proved popular since it gives members a different drive each time. Reservations are critical since we tend to overwhelm some of these places and we need to give them some advance notice to avoid slow service.

Fish is not designed to be a tour of gastronomic delights. The only guarantee is that the beer is cold and the rest is like Forest Gump's box of chocolates – you never know what you are going to get. However, if you bring a positive attitude, a sense of humor and a desire to meet old friends and make new ones you will have fun and not be disappointed.

The Three Amigos, Pam Brunke, Theresa Morgan and Jane Stone, are the planners but they could be the four- five – six Amigos. Everything FAHC does is inclusive not exclusive. Just poke your nose in anywhere and you will be welcome. Remember this is your club. Anyone is welcome to help organize a Fish. It is easy. Just approach one of the ladies and say: "Hi. I'm (*state your name*) and I have an idea for a neat place and I want to organize a Fish. Can you help me?" You will make a new friend and have some fun.

LEAP YEAR FISH FRIDAY – February 29th

The Leap Year Fish gathering kicks off 2008 at the Double Down Bar in Plattsmouth, NE. 226 Main Street. It is located at the eastern end of Main Street in the downtown area of Plattsmouth. The menu includes the usual Hamburgers, Sandwiches and Fish Dinners. The fun usually starts at 6:30 P.M. and sooner is better than later.

The Double Down Bar has the equipment for a new twist for Flatwater's Friday Night Excursions. We will have the use of their Karoke machine. You have the opportunity to tune up your vocal chords and show the membership your hidden talent. "Born to be Wild" anyone?

New this year is the addition of a drawing for a prize at this month's event. You must RSVP to be eligible for the door prize drawing that night

Don't miss the chance for a really great time RSVP to one of us NOW at:

Morgan's jm93552@alltel.net

Brunke's p_brunke@yahoo.com 402-438-3330

Stone's janes_54@msn.com 402-397-2385

Deadline for RSVP's is February 27, 2008.

The Party Room at the Double Down Bar holds 50 People. Let's fill it up. Pam, Teresa & Jane

NEW ARRIVAL



Lee and Sheryl Peterson's new GT

Sheryl is our new secretary and Lee is one of the members at large. Now they can drive British to the Officers meetings in all kinds of weather.



SHAMROCK CHILI FEED

By Editor Joe

New member Sean Cahill hosted the Porsche and British clubs at his shop for chili and a get to know you event. Things we learned were:

We all like chili and cars.

British owners are more apt to wrench on their own cars and have cars that don't run. There might be a connection there.

Porsche drivers go fast – very fast and most of them own a new Snell helmet and racing suit.

To talk to a Porsche driver you need to learn a new language – mostly numbers like 942 and 914. I may not really understand them yet but I like them enough that I'll try harder to learn their language.

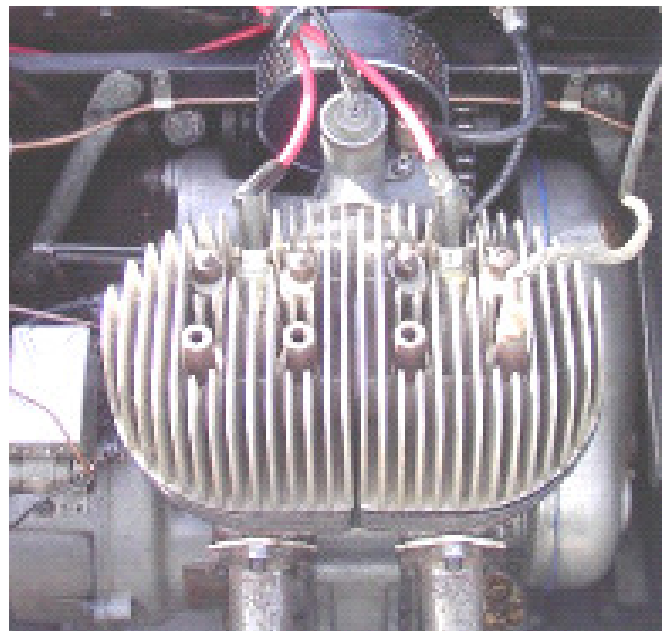
Sean will be inviting us to more Porsche events so if you want to become an automotive bi-lingual you will get your chance.

NEW ARRIVAL



Marty Klein's new 1960 Berkely

Hey Marty, does that bump behind the license plate hold a drag chute? We will answer this and unveil the secrets of this unique vehicle in future issues as we probe under the bonnet and chronicle Marty's encounter with this green machine.



QUIZ: This is?

- (a) A motorcycle engine
- (b) Marty's lawn mower
- (c) The Berkely's turbocharger

MEMBERS ONLY

THE LONG ARM OF FLATWATER

Editors Note: The reputation and impact of the Flatwater Club is far reaching as evidenced by the following comments I received from Gary Monk. I followed up on his e-mail with a phone call and we had a nice visit. Despite his distance from most of our events he will try to make some of them and will throw in with Howard Larson to help run the Sioux City weekend. There was even talk of him forming a satellite chapter of Flatwater. We have friends in faraway places. Meet Gary and Crystal Monk and their fleet from Vermillion South Dakota.

Gary writes: I am writing this because the years of dealing with my MG's and Spitfires have taught me a ton of itty-bitty pieces of information that you can't get out of the book. If you ever have to deal with wire wheel switch-overs, dash out renovations, painting and undercoating, transmission or rear end problems...I've had them all.

To preface, My folks ran a body shop in So.Soo, City, NE for 35 years...I ran the body shop at the Omaha Auto Auction, and the Baltimore / Washington Auto Auction and a private dealership for many years before moving back to the N.E. Nebraska area. Some of you may remember me as the man that organized Arm wrestling tournaments from 1978 thru 1990 in the 6 states around Nebraska.

My best friend at the U. of Iowa had a brand new 1973 MGB that he bought with money he saved thru high school and I loved that car....what a girl-getter it was!

Creating a facility to restore these little cars came about when we took over this place here in Vermillion S.D. We have a little Café on Market St. and do a great breakfast and lunch, Tues. thru Sunday. It has a restaurant in the front, bakery in the middle and a garage in the back. The University President is my landlord and he wanted to keep his Jag in the garage...I told him I needed it worse than him...and got it! We even got the apartment upstairs, so we have an entire 2-story building with basement! The garage is small and hard to get into with a larger vehicle, but sports cars work great. We can get our fixer off to the side far enough to get another in beside it. We put a couple in storage each winter, but that will change next year when we will get them all in after some remodeling.



My Son and I decided to take on the 1972 Midget first. I had bought it for \$1000 a few years earlier and it was sitting at our river cabin...I was just praying a tree limb wouldn't crush it in a storm or something until I could work on it! Could not get the clutch to work, but had another pressure plate and clutch in the trunk and asked my drunken' cousin to put them in one summer afternoon when he was on the lamb for a S.D. DUI. He said he did, but I didn't believe him as some bolts looked they had never been touched. It would start and run well, so I would start it in gear after a warm up...until I snapped the rear axel doing that. These little farts have enough compression to do that, so don't do it! A new axel and knowing how to press the wire wheel spindle off and on was my first mistake solved.

We pulled the car into my newly outfitted garage and stuck her up on jack stands off to the side so we could get another in. In a week we had it disassembled and started to clean each part and decide what we needed to make this a "driver". Paid good money to get a new master and slave for the clutch...as we determined it had to be one or the other. Turned out that the line under the heater core had deteriorated and was leaking under the heater.

Had new ends sent from Cal. and got a new line made. Was painful. Cousin had put new clutch in too!

If you got mega bucks, and let someone else handle these problems, there is no need for you to read on...me, I have 4 nice cars, and less than \$3000 in any of them. (Continue on page 7)

(Members Only from page 6)

- Wasn't long, motor and trans out, we primed, sealed and painted it!
- Wasn't long, tranny locked up in first...book says...engine out...OMG!
- Engine out, tranny on the bench...BB in the slide syncro hanging, really?

Of the 4, the Midget I live to drive the most. I feel I am lower in the cockpit, and the ride is smoother. Amazingly it will outrun my 1498's on the top end! Carb lessons I took are what made that work. SU's can perform well if you can understand what makes them go.

1978 Spitfire. We found this in a grove of trees. It took us 4 days to clean the carbs and figure out why it wasn't getting gas. Someone in the past had put a gas tank liner (of some sort of rubber liner) in it and it had disintegrated. We took out the tank, brought in my boat gas tank, filled it with straight gas and it fired right up and it quit plugging up the filter.

Whoo-hoo I got a 1979 Spitfire all of a sudden! My friend bought the car years ago and just never had time to work on it. I do and by the time any of you see me next summer I may be driving it!



1974 MGB. THE project. Graduation present for my oldest granddaughter.



She is in 11th at Omaha Central. Won't be long. In the garage for a year now. Stripped, undercoated, inner coated, new moldings and weather-strips, hardtop and new convertible top. It has every new gasket and weather-strip you can get. We're ready to see if the wheels are true...have 6 wire wheels and hope to find 4 O.K. Engine out restoration with all new brake pads and wheel cylinders. New dash and gauges too.

Finally, I have to say...we are new friends to your club and we will try to start a S.E. So Dak. or Tri-state club this year up here. There are plenty of good ol' boys that have a car in the corner of a garage that would like to drive it with some other folks. We enjoy the Flatwater news and hope we can get to an event or two this year. Looking forward to '08 and friendly folks!

If you are up our way, stop at the Market St. Café for a meal and car talk. Contact Monks at 605-624-9877 or Gary Monk@msn.com



GARAGE TOUR SATURDAY 15 MARCH

Mark your calendar and plan to visit 4 garages in Papillion. Three members Joe Kueper, Bill McKay and Larry Simodynes will host the event. You will encounter different methods of heating a garage, creative storage, a DIY portable-economy paint booth, several on going projects and more.

The tour starts at Joe's Garage at 9 A.M. Call in if you know you are coming so we have enough coffee and doughnut holes. RSVP to Joe at 402-592-3132 or editorjoe@msn.com



Museum of American Speed

**World's Largest Collection
Vintage to Exotic Racing Engines
& Speed Equipment**

SPEEDWAY MOTORS TOUR 22 March

Back by popular demand is the tour of the Speedway Motors museum in Lincoln 9 A.M. on Saturday March 22.

Since this is a guided tour event, advance admission payment, \$10 per person, is required to reserve a spot so act now.

Contact Bob Shaw, who is handling the arrangements, to get your ticket and address any questions **ASAP**.

Mail your ten bucks to: Bob Shaw, 3882 Staar, Lincoln, Ne. 68503 Contact Bob at: 402-435-4905 or shaws@mlcltd.com

TOOL TIME

By Joe Kueper

The Vice-Grip locking pliers have long been hailed as the most useful tool ever made. This tool has worldwide recognition and is used to take things apart and hold things together from the blistering deserts to the frigid arctic. My first tool was a vice-grip because at seventeen I was told by a mechanic he could not work on my Triumph because “them foreign cars are all metric”. I’ve learned a lot since then and I still have the original vice-grips I bought to work on my first car. I have beat on it with sledge hammers to remove rusted nuts, welded on it while clamping parts and used it to hold my car together so I could make it home in a blizzard. Vice-grip has a special place with me and in my toolbox.



Can you imagine how I felt when Bill McKay suggested we drop by the vice-grip outlet store in Dewitt Nebraska on our way to the Porsche Club’s chili feed? To me, this was like visiting the holy grail of tools. I was excited. I had visions of pulling up to a huge building with a manicured lawn, flagpole and a ten-foot vice-grip on a pedestal as a centerpiece in front of tall windows exposing an elaborate show room.

As we entered Dewitt I noticed it was quite small and there were no obvious directional signs to the famous Erwin tool factory. Perhaps we were not taking the main entrance into town. No. We were on Main Street but it looked like a ghost town. Except for Tina’s Tan and Trim and the Go Big Red watering hole everything else looked empty. At the end of Main Street we saw a huge pale green building that looked like it had additions haphazardly build on to it over the years. We drove around the building and found the office entrance tucked away on the side. It was closed. After two trips around the building, which filled a block, we asked directions to the outlet store from a man coming out of the loading dock. “Just down Main Street on the right. You can’t miss it,” he said. We drove back down Main Street and missed it so we turned around and crept back and noticed a small Irwin Tools sign in the window of one of the closed up buildings. This must be it.

Inside we found a 20 by 30 foot room a counter with a cash register several dusty steel shelves and some large boxes on the floor. It was as cold as a meat locker and the lady said she got there too late to turn on the heat. The boxes had different types of vice-grips and hand made magic marker signs announce \$2.40 each – limit 10 per customer. I filled a cardboard box with an assortment of seven vice –grips and six carbide tipped saw blades. My check out receipt read \$31.86. Experience priceless. They take cash or a check - no Visa. So the next time you find yourself in Dewitt with nothing to do on a Sunday 9-12 or a Wednesday 4-6, (that is what the sign says), drop into the Irwin Outlet Store. Oh yea, and don’t expect anything but a good deal.

RUNNING WHEN PARKED

(Well, maybe not.) By Joe Kueper

I was having a conversation with Brian Goldsmith when he told me about an old MG YA that he saw over at the U-Pull-It junkyard in South Omaha. It sounded interesting so I called Phil Brauer, who I promised to take on a junk parts run, and off we went for a day of rummaging through old cars in search of treasure. Phil found a space saver spare for his MG and I found some wheels for my old Mustang. We also found the remains of the MG YA.

This poor creature was languishing between a 60's vintage Jag sedan and 80's vintage Porsche. She looked sadly out of place being a relic from 1947 stripped of the important parts like her bold vertical chromed slat radiator grill and MG badge that distinguished her as something special. She was severely neglected and ravaged by scavengers. Yet upon closer inspection she still reflected signs of a classic automobile. As I opened the front passenger suicide style door I noticed the window opening was completely trimmed in wood. Years of exposure had stripped the finish leaving the wood gray and checked. The wood had shrunk and exposed the seams where the pieces joined. That which was left of the upholstery showed a lot of detail with wrapped door pulls and piping on the seams. I pulled down the center armrest from the rear seat and was delighted to see it had been protected from the elements and shone a bright red color from the original fit. It had to be classy in its day and occupants in the back seat undoubtedly were made to feel like they were riding in luxury. It was a faux Rolls Royce if you will.



The wood flooring had long rotted away and the dash with its instruments was gone and left a large hole. Vandals had not yet made off with the right hand telescopic chrome steering column that glistened amongst the carnage. Close inspection of the engine revealed the only marks of her heritage. The exhaust manifold bore the distinct marque of MG cast into its side. I scraped layers of oil soaked dirt off the side of the engine to find



a brass plate that identified the engine as a replacement. No doubt this fine vehicle with its heavy gage metal body out lasted the first engine and was worthy of this second one. Too bad some one did not have the foresight to recognize it as something special and find someone to save it once again. I left the gravesite shaking my head at her plight.

The YA had intrigued me so I went on line in search of more information on this model and found that only 6,158 were produced. This saloon was built on a steel frame with leaf springs in the rear and independent wishbones and springs in the front. This all rode on bolt-on steel disc 16 inch wheels turned by an MG first – rack and pinion steering and stopped by 9 inch drums. Power was provided by a 1250 cc 4-cylinder engine with a compression ratio of 7.2:1 that produced 46 bhp at 4,800rpm and transferred it through a manual four speed synchronized in all but 1st. Special features included an opening front screen, sliding steel sunroof and rear window blind. Quite unique was the Smiths "Jackall" four wheel jacking system with hydraulic jacks at all four wheels



that lifts the car for tire changes and maintenance. A hand lever located near the engine operates the system.



Several days later I was feeling melancholy and could not get the MG YA off my mind. I was flipping through my Hemmings magazine and discovered a restoration company out East that specialized in pre-war MG's. I called and they wanted the car however, all attempts to buy it from the junkyard failed. It seems they either lack the proper licensing to sell it whole or lacked the desire. I even tried to buy it ala carte without success. The whole futile effort bummed me out but I'm glad to have gotten to know the MG YA

How Much Do You Drive?

By Terry Davis

How much do you drive your British car (or cars)? How many miles in a year? (Assuming you have a working odometer, so that you know.) A few years ago I got curious about how many miles I was putting on each of my cars each year and started keeping track. Okay, maybe that sounds a little obsessive, but baseball nuts (geeks?) get off knowing things like Mickey Mantle's batting average in his rookie year. I guess I get off knowing things about my cars.

Anyway, I was curious to know if there were any cars that I particularly favored, or if I drove them all relatively equally. Each year, late in December or early in January, I write down the mileage for each car and compare it with the previous year's figures. I have noticed some interesting things (interesting to me at least).

First, while I don't drive any particular car (other than my big Healey) all that far in a year, when you add it all up I drive my LBCs farther than I would have thought I did. Second, again with the exception of the big Healey, I drive them all relatively equally. Third, my total LBC mileage is relatively close to what I drive my 96 Porsche and my 97 Miata combined, so I guess I split my time and mileage fairly evenly between new sports cars and old.

To illustrate, I compiled a table showing some mileage figures. I actually forgot to write down my mileage in January of 2007, so my total mileage in 2006 and 2007 for each car was evenly divided between those 2 years, with the exception of my big Healey as noted below:

<u>Car</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>2007</u>
67 Healey 3000	1176	716	4580	1648
67 Sprite	NA	572	475	475
60 Bugeye (blue)	607	351	415	415
59 Bugeye (white)	NA	764	692	692
60 TR3A	865	1414	375	375
73 GT6	NA	NA	492	492
96 Porsche	2976	2914	2895	2895
97 Miata	6215	2005	2025	2025

There are a couple of outliers: Our son Ryan had my Miata for part of 2004, hence the extra mileage (and extra wear and tear, I'm sure!). In 2005 I drove the TR3 to Illinois for VTR. In 2006 I drove the Healey 4000+ miles to Maine and back. And in 2007 I drove the Healey to Colorado Conclave.

Average total LBC mileage per year = 4398

Average Porsche + Miata mileage per year = 5988

Average total sports car mileage per year = 10,386

So I drive an LBC 4398 miles a year, for an average of about 350 miles per month. Really it's more like 550 miles per month if you count the driving season as about 8 months a year. That's more than I would have thought. The actual winner, though, in terms of the vehicle I drive the most, is hands down my 2002 Explorer – averaging about 11,000 miles per year. But with an average total sports car mileage of 10,386 per year, at least I'm having fun about half the time!

Anybody else out there know their yearly LBC mileage? If so, let me know. It might be interesting to do some comparisons of club members' LBC mileage as another item of totally useless trivia. Speaking of which, the Mick's batting average in 1951 was .267. Happy motoring!

Vintage racing news (and other stuff) from the Flatwater Auto Racing Team

Driving Shoes and Driving Gloves

The last couple of months I've written about helmets. This month I'm going to jump to the other end of the body – the feet – to talk about driving equipment. From what I've seen, I would bet that most people don't give much thought to their shoes, unless they are starting to get serious about their driving. I know I didn't. For Driver's Ed track weekends all that is required is a pair of leather shoes and for several years I just wore regular athletic shoes. I eventually noticed a couple of things. First, regular shoes don't have much "feel" through the soles. Second, the soles can get slippery when wet. Also, when driving my Bugeye it was quite difficult at times to press the brake pedal without simultaneously pressing on the accelerator because the foot well is so narrow and the soles of my shoes are so wide. This resulted in an odd sort of unintentional heel and toe, which was really more of a "toe and toe," when stopping.

I noticed that most of the serious drivers wore driving shoes and thought that I would give them a try. What a difference! For the first time I was really able to feel the pedals, modulate the throttle and brake better, and no more "toe and toe" stops. Now when driving the Bugeye I can actually do a "proper" heel and toe downshift ("proper" being, of course, a relative term).

Driving shoes are typically made of suede uppers with non-slip rubber soles, and are sized like regular athletic shoes. They are available in a variety of colors and either high-top or low-top styles. They are fire-retardant Nomex and prices range from approximately \$70.00 to \$200.00 for shoes from major manufacturers such as Piloti, Simpson, and Sparco.

As with helmets, you don't need to spend a boatload of money on driving shoes. Very good ones can be had in the \$70.00 to \$100.00 range, about the price of a good pair of athletic shoes. Depending on the amount of driving you do, they can last for several years. Another advantage of having a dedicated pair of driving shoes is that you won't scuff up the side of your street shoe when doing that perfect throttle blip during a heel and toe. I'm so happy with mine that I'm thinking about finding a pair of narrow soled shoes for regular driving. It certainly makes driving the Bugeye easier, and sounds a lot less embarrassing!

Jumping to the hands, I've also noticed that few drivers other than those who are "racers" wear driving gloves. I started wearing simple leather driving gloves (I think from Moss) a few years ago when driving on track weekends and in competition events. They REALLY help when it's hot, your hands are sweaty, and you're sawing away on a plastic steering wheel like most of our LBCs have. They also help when driving with a leather-covered wheel.

For vintage racing I obviously need a regular pair of Nomex racing gloves. These also are not horrendously expensive, ranging in price from about \$100.00 to about \$170.00. While the \$100.00 ones looked nice for starters, after talking with Jim Bryant at ApexSPG I decided to splurge and ask for a pair of Sparco Tide gloves (\$170.00) for Christmas.

I'm thinking of getting a blue driving suit and so I put a matching pair of blue racing gloves on my Christmas list. After Kathy ordered them, Jim from Apex was kind enough to call and say that most people don't get gloves that match their suits, but rather get red gloves because they are more visible when signaling another car to pass. Another example of a simple thing that I didn't know or think of, but that can be important from a safety standpoint.

I have yet to try my new gloves when driving, but they feel great and are snug but comfortable. I've read that racing gloves generally should fit a little tighter than regular gloves. They need to provide both greater feel through the steering wheel and greater grip, as well as better protection for your hands. Once again, I think Jim at Apex has steered me in the right direction when buying equipment.

Shoes and gloves may seem like little things, but sometimes it's the little things that can make a difference. See you in the paddock!

Flatwater Austin-Healey Club

A chapter of the Austin-Healey Club of America

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Greg Lemon checks out the business end of a Porsche at Sean Cahill's Shamrock garage



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