



Vintage Racing Club of British Columbia

VANTAGE December 2003
The voice of VRCBC

Vancouver Lister Corvette Dominates Monterey Historic Race

Submitted by Bob Hayes



Rob Walton of Aspen Colorado (a Wal-Mart heir) currently races the ex-Westwood race car at historic races though out North America. At this year's Monterey Historic Race in August he led a Lister domination of the class for Sports racing cars over 2500CC built between 1955 and 1959. Lister-Corvettes placed 1st and 2nd followed by Lister-Jaguars in 4th and 6th (John McCaw of Seattle, owner of the Canucks) with a further Lister-Corvette retiring early.

The Pacific North West Lister's:

With the destruction of the Jaguar factory by fire in 1956, the need for a replacement for the D-Type Jaguar was required, Brian Lister a successful race car builder in England was contracted to build a car using the Jaguar driveline in a competitive chassis. For 1957/58 he built 18 cars with lightweight aluminum bodies (some were even made with magnesium bodies) which were called Knobbly Listers due to the unusual shape of its body. The first two of these cars were sent to Briggs Cunningham to replace his D-Type Jaguars. He put Walter Hansin in one for the 1958 National Championship which he won with ease. Another seven Lister's went to a dealership owned by Texan's Jim Hall (of Chaparral fame) and Carroll Shelby who put Corvette motors in them and sold them to enthusiasts throughout North America. One of these cars came to the Pacific NorthWest to Tom Carstens in 1957. Tom ran the car then sold it in 1958 to Al Dean of Deans Van Lines for another Northwest driver Bill Pollack drive in the LA Times Grand Prix. After a few more years of hard use this cars was in a destroyed by fire at Riverside (they had to use a front end loader to extinguish the fire by dumping sand on it due to the magnesium), it is rumored that the car is still there under the sand where it was buried in 1962 outside turn 1.

Tom replaced this Lister with a new Costin-bodied Lister (one of approximately 40 built) which had a more pleasing shape but actually was less aerodynamic and slower than the previous cars for the 1959 season. Tom raced this car several times here in the Northwest, placing 2nd in June 1959 at Maryhill Loops, retiring at Shelton in August 1959, and winning at Shelton in 1960. He attempted to sell the car in June of 1960 and eventually sold it to fellow Northwest competitor Lew Florence in March of 1962. Lew raced it first at the July race in Kent, and had an excellent race in September when he placed third behind Dan Gurney and Masten Gregory at Seattle's Northwest Grand Prix; he finished the season at Riverside in October.

He sold the car that winter to Ladner's Bill Stephens for \$5,000. Bill was a 22 year old UBC student at the time and had been racing locally for 5 years in a Porsche 356. He and his friends (Harry Holland and Ian Bailey) prepared the 1600 lb car for the 1963 season. The engine was a 327 Chevrolet Corvette motor that had been modified by Edelbrock in California to produce over 400hp, allowing a top speed of 160MPH. He had purchased the car with the hopes of going professional sports car racing full time. In the May 4th 1963 Western Canadian Championships races at Westwood he placed 6th in the first heat and 3rd in the final heat to finish 3rd overall.



Bill Stephens in #62 passing Stan Burnett's Ferrari at the hairpin. Photo by Mike McBride

Bill raced his Bardahl sponsored Costin-Lister winning the May 26th race at Westwood, and The Rose Cup in Portland where he out duelled fellow Vancouver racer Bob McLean.

Unfortunately in the July United States Road Racing Championship race at Seattle, he had a serious crash effectively ending his season. Note-Vic Edelbrock campaigning a 1959 Costin-Lister (SN BLH130), equipped with a 338cu in Chevrolet, had a serious crash at a recent Pacific Northwest Historic race at Seattle when he rolled it on the short high speed straight on the bottom of the hill, the same place that Bill Stephens crashed his Lister-Corvette 40 years ago.

He eventually had to sell the car to Portland's Stan Bennett the following winter to pay for the repair bill. Bennett raced it in 1964 with no success then sold to another Portland racer Bob Erickson who placed 13th at the Laguna Seca USRRC race in 1965.



Bill Stephens, Stan Burnett, and Tom Vaness make the front row at Seattle.

[Vantage Archives](#)

About the Club	Contacts	Rules & Eligibility	Schedule	Links	Photo Gallery	Vantage			For Sale
--------------------------------	--------------------------	---	--------------------------	-----------------------	-------------------------------	-------------------------	--	---	--------------------------
