



## Vintage Racing Club of British Columbia

**VANTAGE November 2003**  
The voice of VRCBC

### Classic Racing Jaguars

Submitted by Evan Williams



Noted Jaguar restorer Terry Larson with his restored C Type Sn 023 and D Type Sn 017

In 1950 Jaguar had sent several XK120S to contest the most important race in Europe, the Lemans 24Hour race, unfortunately they highest placing was a high dismal 12th, not where they wanted to be. So the following year they created the first of the C type sending a XK120C which placed first overall. For the 1952 race they made special race cars featuring their XK120 6 cylinder engine in a sleek body and lightweight chassis weighing only 2200 lbs that allowed them to reach 144mph , ( much higher than the street XK120's 120 mph) and introduced disc brakes. These were the first of the classic Jaguar C type racers, over the next two years 54 of these were built primarily for racing by the factory and sold to "Gentleman" racers throughout the world.

In the 1952 Le Mans race all three cars retired with engine problems due to the new aerodynamic body not allowing in enough air to cool the motors, but in 1953 they won again placing 1st, 2nd, and 4th , dominating the race which they would continue to do for the next 5 years.

The only C type racer ( serial # 023) that came to the Pacific Northwest was sold to Seattle Jag Dealer Joe Henderson in early 1953, it was delivered to Portland and Dave Fogg of Seattle had the "unpleasant" task of driving it up I-5 to the Seattle dealership, I'm sure he enjoyed the trip and "never" exceeded the posted speed limit. It was raced by Jack Douglas and Bill Pollack with some success . It placed 2nd in the August 1953 Seafair race, and participated in many California races as well. In 1955 during a race at Torrey Pines in California it was rolled by Jack Douglas, in the same race one year later it was rolled again this time by Les Critchlow. By this time the aluminum body was in need of replacement, but the Jaguar factory had recently been destroyed by fire, so an alternative was needed. At this time Californian Bill Devin was producing fiberglass bodied sports cars which were approximately the same size and you could buy the bodies for only \$295.00. Horvath Motors replaced the damaged Jaguars body with the fiberglass Devlin body and the C Type became a Jaguar powered special. In 1961 the car was traded a Jaguar mechanic Frank Schierenbeck , he proceeded to race the car but soon decided to use it as a street car instead, installing lights and turn signals allowing him to drive it into the 1970's. Early in the 70's he took it apart to keep his nephew from racing it in SCCA events and stored it in his shed in central California. It remained there till noted Jaguar restorer Terry Larson heard of it in the early 1980's and after nearly a decade pried it out of Franks shed, restoring it to its former glory. It's currently owned by Christian Jenny of Switzerland who races it at the best Vintage racing events world wide.

The D type.

11 works race cars were produced between 1954 and 1956 and 82 customer cars, some of these were converted at the factory to XKSS road cars in 1955 and 1956.

They also were very successful at Le Mans, taking 2nd in 1954, 1st and 3rd in 1955, 1st and 4th in 1956, and sweeping 1st thru 4th in 1957 as well as 6th in their last effort.

In 1956 the Jaguar Factory was destroyed by fire after the six works cars were built thus effectively stopping any development of new cars for the next several years.

Five of these D Type/XKSS cars made their way to Canada between 1956 and 1962:

Two came as used race cars sold into Ontario:

SN 403 one of the works 1954 Lightweight cars raced unsuccessfully for the factory then was crashed heavily at Goodwood in 1956 rebuilt it was raced extensively in England before being sold to David Jaycox in Ontario in 1960 . It raced at Mosport in the early sixties but was crashed heavily several times, including a fatality when Alistair Cameron Smith crashed in the 1963 Players 200 at Mosport during practice.



SN 017 after the Alister Cameron Smith crash at Mosport

It eventually was retired after a crash in the early 60's and was left damaged till the early 1980's when it was returned to Lynx motorcars in England to be restored. It currently is Vintage raced by noted Jaguar restorer Terry Larson of Arizona.

Sn 545 was raced in England and the northeast USA, it was crashed in 1960 at Watkins Glen and the remains were sold to Canadian Bill Sadler, an Ontario race car builder. Later it was campaigned by John Cannon and Hugh Dixon. In 1980 it was sold into Australia where it remains today.

Two were sold new as XKSS cars sold into Quebec,

Sn 557 and 575 were shipped to Canada in 1956, both were converted to XKSS

Jaguars, Sn 557 was purchased by Peter Hessler of Quebec, it's currently owned by noted Californian Vintage racer John Mozart. Sn 575 was sold to Stan McRoberts of Montreal currently owned by Stan Marsh USA.



Jaguar D Type SN 558 as currently owned by Gerry Nell

Sn 558 was sold in Vancouver to Plimly Motors in 1956, they "demonstrated" the car at the sports car races then held at the Abbotsford airport, eventually the car was sold to James Rattenbury who raced it at Abbotsford, Westwood and later Seattle. Not happy with the stock Jaguar he modified the car, to increase the handling and power. He lengthened the wheelbase to 95 inches, and installed factory optional a De Dion rear axle assembly. On the power side he installed Hilborn Fuel injection and a Roots blower running off the engines front pulley. The front body was changed from the standard short nose to the longer Le Mans nose to fit the extra length. Jim raced it in 28 races over the next three years, making the podium in over 50% of these races.



In April 1961 it was purchased by Starr Calvert of Seattle, he continued to race it in the Pacific Northwest with some success and a few crashes as well. By 1963 the D type now seven years old needed to be reworked to stay competitive with the emerging Shelby Cobra's and Corvettes racers. Starr used the next two years to redesign the car to allow an American V8 to be installed. This was a common practice in North America when expensive European sports cars had extensive motor failure. It was cheaper to install one of the new lightweight American small block's in your Jaguar, producing a 100 more horsepower, plus parts were also readily available certainly not the case in Ferrari's and Jaguars.



Starr Calvert decided that a small block wouldn't produce enough power, so he installed a 427 Ford Nascar motor with dual 4 barrel carburetors. This allowed him over 450 horsepower and an equal amount of torque that would have been competitive with the Cobra's and Corvettes of the time. Starr had some success in 1965 winning several races including the May Bardhal Trophy race at Seattle and the August Seattle Trophy race. Unfortunately in the September Texaco race at Westwood he crashed heavily into the trees on the outside of the carousel turn effectively destroying the car



It was eventually sold as parts, which eventually made their way back to Lynx Motor Cars in England to be restored. It was sold to a French enthusiast remaining in Europe till 1987 when it was sold into California, it was sold to an English enthusiast who had it restored to a short nose D type. After racing it for 6 years in England it was sold to Mr Eduardo Baptista of Mexico who campaigned it for another five years till it was purchased by Mr Gerald Nell of Wisconsin (who had Terry Larson restore it again), he enters it at Concourse events in North America.

#### VINTAGE RACING CLUB of B.C. General Meeting Minutes

**October 14th, 2003** at Cruisers Restaurant, Langley.

The meeting was called to order by the Vice President, Evan Williams, at 8.00 pm.  
 The President, Dave Williams, sent his absentee regrets from Mount Kilimanjaro !  
 The minutes of the September meeting were amended for errors in the Treasurer's report and then proposed for acceptance.  
 Proposer, Mike Tate, Seconder, Bob Barg. Unanimous.

#### Race Director

11 promises for entries for October 19th Vintage Grid event received so far. This will be the last race for this year.

#### Treasurer's report

The Treasurer gave his report. Cash on hand \$20,627.52 Term deposit #1 \$20,588.18 Term deposit #2 \$2,192.94  
 Total = \$43,329.64.

#### Old Business

Ian Wood met with Patrick Stewart regarding HMR 2004. Jaguar will be the featured marque for next years HMR. Promotional material was discussed. He will get in touch with Barry Mason of the Jaguar Club.

A discussion was held regarding the proposal by Perrin Hayes that a change be made to the Classification rules in order to add another Class that would allow cars from the early 1970's to compete. The members present were asked to state their opinions and did so as follows:-

Bob Smith Against the proposal. Did not believe that it was "Vintage".  
 Leigh Anderson Not in favour but felt it could be handled by special resolution via a mail in ballot.  
 Bob Barg Strongly in favour. Would like to see it expanded to race cars of that period.  
 Ian Wood Feels that SOVERN may be interested in some rule changes and we should be too. If the rules were specific it could work.  
 Mike Tate Would like to see the date of 1969 opened up to include cars of up to 1972/3 era.  
 Tires & rim sizes should be strictly controlled.  
 Andrew Taylor The changes proposed should go ahead.  
 Ivan Lesner Has mixed feelings. Would prefer to stay with existing rules.  
 Hugh Archer Mixed feelings. Concerned about speed differentials.

Ian Wood thanked Perrin Hayes for the work that he had done in preparing this proposal. The executive promised to formulate a proposal that could be addressed to the Club members via mail in ballot.

New helmets are available at MOPAC for \$195 and are SNELL 2000 approved, made in China.

Gunter & Evan are working on the new REVS specs for the 2004 season.

**New Business**

Mike Tate announced that he has had a conversation with Bergit Roberts regarding a new trophy that would be awarded annually. This trophy would be awarded in the normal manner by the Executive but she will give input on the criteria for the award. The club will however make the final decision. Ian Wood proposed that it could be called the Dave Roberts Fellowship award, seconded by Bob Smith. Carried.

Gala Evening & banquet is to be held at Cruisers on November 29th, all welcome!  
Try to sell as many tickets as possible.

The Club is still looking for volunteers to edit the Vantage - any offers?  
Members need to start looking for prospective new Executive volunteers for next year.

**Swap & Shop**

4 Alfa wheels & tires for sale 195-60-15 \$150.00. 1972 Triumph Spitfire, MK4 Don Schick 435-7275.  
Bob Barg has a trailer for sale.  
Leigh has 4 rims for a 1947 MG TC for sale.

The motion to adjourn the meeting at 9.55 pm. Was proposed by Evan Williams and seconded by Mike Tate.  
Perrin Hayes  
Secretary pro tem

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