



VANTAGE

Winter 2008-2009

President's Message

Well everyone, thank you for a very fine year. It has been my pleasure to be your president and I thank you all for your patience with me in my "Novice" year. My particular thanks to Evan Williams who has kept me out of major trouble, as well as all members of the Executive. So here are the highlights:

Membership: ably shepherded by Stan Guy, hovered around 100 members this year of which about 35 are active and about 25 race with us, and/or SOVREN. New brochures have been produced (photos by Paul Bonner) and are assisting in getting out the word about our club.

Meetings: We usually alternate between a member's home and a restaurant. Particular thanks to those members who have shared their hospitality with us many times. Highlight venue was the Museum of Flight- thank you Randy Custer.

Website: www.vrcbc.ca continues to grow thanks to Michael Zbarsky. It has been enhanced significantly by Tom Johnston's and Mike Tate's continuation of the Vantage Newsletter.

REVS Series: 2008 has been the most active year to date, races taking place on CACC weekends. Randy Custer and Marc Ashbrook gave us our first year of

VRCBC Tech. We averaged about 14 cars over each of the five regular events.

This year's overall champion is Roger Flescher, who worked very hard to unseat perennial winner Ivan Lessner. Congratulations Roger!

Historics: August 16 and 17: Germania Theme: Ian Woods in charge highest entry in recent times; 92.

Highlights were Al Ores Race, Red Baron, Kees Nierop, Hans and Franz, announcers, anthems, car corral, track tour, new track configuration. We faced a direct conflict with Monterrey dates and many, many, local events which eliminated several regular entries. Paid Gate was down by about 50 folks. Maybe too hot Saturday- 36 degrees.

Experiment of raising eligibility to 1988 (from 1974) for Sports racers and Formula cars had little effect except for Formula V which doubled their numbers and made up for the date conflict losses.

Kudos to SCCBC, CACC, and META. VRCBC could not put on an event like this without strong support from this group. Indeed we thank them for the support at every race. Despite some staggeringly high costs-track, ambulance, tent, we broke about even on a \$40,000. budget. This involved almost all members



of the club in some capacity and has become a premier event

Year end Gala:

Saturday, November 22 at the Delta Town and Country. Thanks to Bob Smith as key organizer.

Next year: The Westwood 50th Anniversary Year.

Several cars have been bought locally by folks who intend to join us. Increased participation is expected so we are looking forward to a banner year in 2009.

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VRCBC Annual Gala and Awards Ceremony



You are cordially invited to attend the Vintage Racing Club of BC's Annual Gala!

On Saturday November 22nd, 2008, we will celebrate the end of another season's racing, and honour the volunteers, competitors, and our associations with SOVREN, SCCBC, and META, without whom the success of our vintage racing would not be possible.

The Gala will be held at the Delta Town & Country Inn, 6005 Highway 17 (at Hwy #99). Dress optional. There will be a full buffet dinner in our private ballroom, wine on your table, and our awards ceremony. There will also be some exciting door prizes to be won!

Official Timing (Transponders are not required):

5:00 PM: Bench Racing and Cocktails
6:00 PM: Dinner
7:15 PM: Acknowledgements & Awards
8:30 PM: Dancing & Frivolity

Book early to avoid disappointment by sending in the attached Registration Form by November 15th!! The cost is \$45.00 CAD per person, gratuities included. Payment is requested in advance; see the Registration Form for details.

For those requiring overnight accommodations, the Delta Town & Country will be offering rooms at a rate of \$99.00 per night for double or single occupancy. To reserve a room, please call 1-888-777-1266 and mention our event.

For more information, please contact Bob Smith at bobsmithyvr@telus.net

See you there!

Jim Latham
President
Vintage Racing Club of BC

REVS Series Winds Up

R.E.V.S.
RIVERS EDGE VINTAGE SERIES

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REVS Winner: Roger Flescher at the office in his Sunbeam Tiger (Paul Bonner photo)

The Future of Motor Sport as we know it

Tom Johnston

We keep hearing that motor sport is the biggest sport in the world but somehow things do not seem to be going very well around here.

Molson Indy Vancouver ends, Westwood gone, Langley Speedway, closed but still there.

Attempts to build new motor sport venues in the Vancouver area struggling at best, the same in Seattle, Race City in Calgary is reported in trouble.

Most racing circuits are under challenge for noise or traffic by neighbours, Laguna Seca, Sears Point, Portland International Raceway, Pacific Raceway, and Mission Raceway. Maybe what is happening here is an indicator of the future of motor sport in general.

WHY?

The automobile is falling from favour

In years past, automobiles were seen to be wonderful things. They gave everyone freedom and mobility by allowing movement out of the busy city to a life in the dream home in the suburbs. Today, those suburb dwellers (and the remaining city dwellers) regard the automobile as an evil, polluting, non-green monster, and events involving motor sport to be politically incorrect. Where I live I see suburban housewives driving their two-ton SUVs taking the kids three blocks to school.

However, it is OK; the SUV is a hybrid (albeit with a 5-litre V8)

The greying of the sport and growth of vintage racing

A couple of years ago I took one of my old cars to a vintage race at Mosport. What I found was the same guys racing the same cars as they did forty years ago. Some even had the same wives (pit popies had become grannies). Vintage racing is about old guys recalling their youth (as it is in my case), or somebody else's youth. It is a lot of fun, wonderful camaraderie, a dramatic spectacle, the cars are being exercised, BUT IT IS NOT REAL RACING.

This is particularly noticeable in the Hot Rod community; it has become a hobby for sixtyish guys.

The festival rather than race

NASCAR and Champ Car have both come to the realization that the festival type events draw more paying customers than the traditional races. Exit polling at this type of event reveals that only about one quarter to one third of the attendees has any idea of what is going on. In July of 2005 on the weekend that was to have been the Molson Indy, were the hotels deserted? No, the former race fans were off doing something else (that they may not have understood either).

Such festivals draw crowds but do they create enduring motor sport fans, I think not.

Creeping loss of facilities

Most motor sport facilities were built in remote areas near major cities. The cities grow and inevitably, the tracks are closed due to traffic or noise complaints. Ironically, the growth of the cities is greatly due to the mobility made possible by the automobile.

An interesting aspect of this is the return to popularity of airport circuits. Many cities have airports that are well inside of the city. In the same way that racetracks have been swallowed up by growing cities. Airports are under threat too, but they seem to have been more successful in staying in place. Off the streets and on to the airports (again). The all the apples in one basket situation.

Sanitization of the sport;

Ernest Hemmingway is credited with saying "There are only three real sports: mountain climbing, bull-fighting, and automobile racing". I presume he meant that they are the only sports where you could easily be killed while participating. By that definition, auto racing is no longer a real sport. No one would argue against safety in any sport, but the reality is that very few people

are killed or even injured in traditional racing these days, much less the new generation of, drifting and tuner cars.

Many new racetracks are being built principally for a TV audience, certainly the cost per ticket for Formula 1 races exclude all but the wealthy.

Many new tracks are being constructed as private clubs similar to golf and country clubs where guys with \$100 haircuts can drive their expensive sports cars in such a way that would land them in the slammer on a public highway, but doing it in safe and politically correct way.

Many enthusiasts think of the 1950s and 1960s as the golden age of motor sport, in

hindsight we now see that the era was horrifically dangerous.

So what does the future hold?

A hundred years ago there were millions of horses in North America, they were used in agriculture, transportation and industry and were a critical part of the economy. Today there are substantially fewer horses, for the most part; their roles are in sport, entertainment, leisure activities or as pets. There are still horse races but you can wonder how well they would be attended if there was no betting.

In the same way, one hundred years from now, there will still be cars and even car racing but IT WON'T

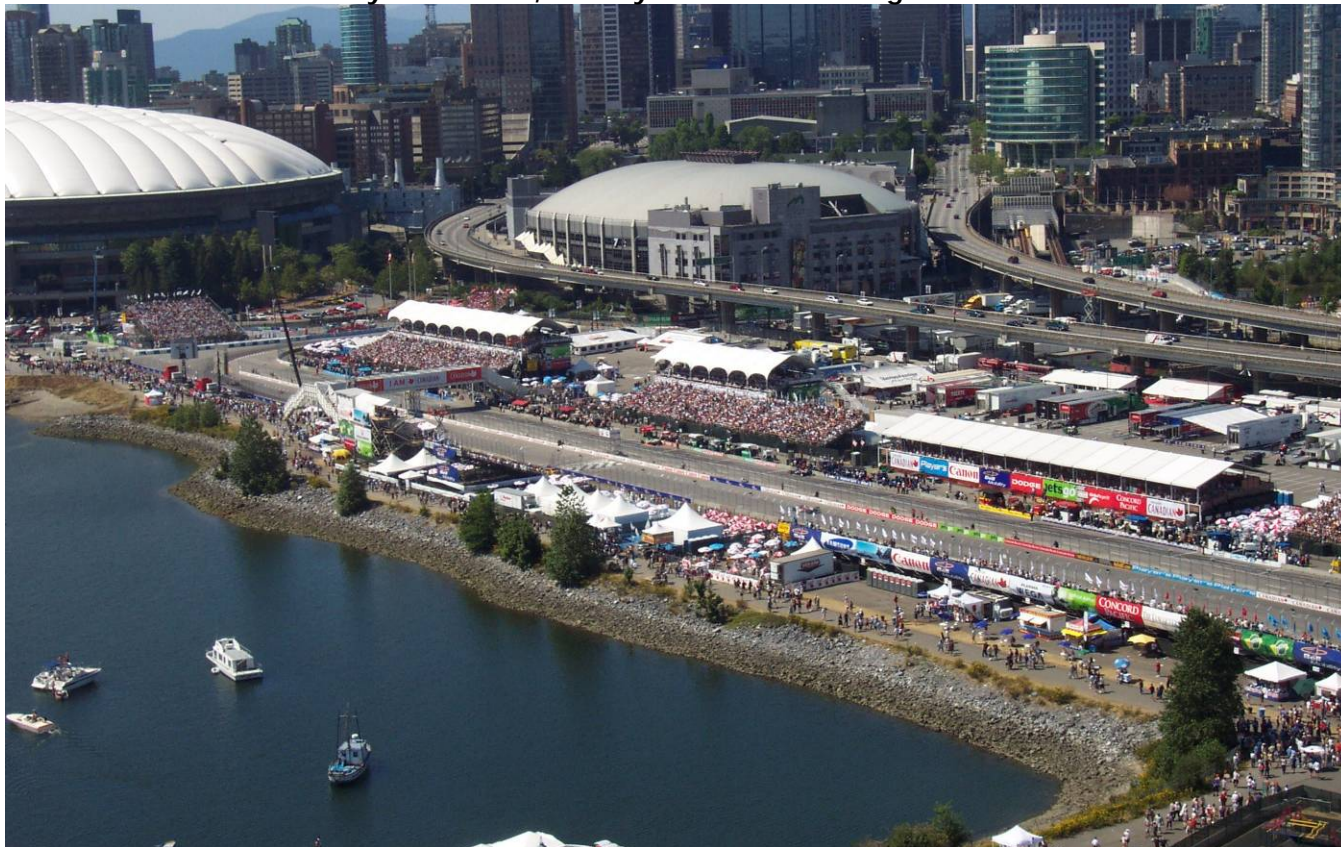
BE REAL RACING.

There is an Olympic sport called Biathlon, which traces its roots back to Scandinavian winter warfare. Many other sports have similar backgrounds, fencing, boxing, and many equestrian sports. That is the future of what we call motor sport today. It will still be there but **IT WON'T BE REAL RACING**

Note: This article was published in Western Driver a few years ago. I don't think much has changed.

Tom

Below: The Last Molson Indy Vancouver, did anyone notice it was gone?



Mike Tate's 'Tate á Tate

Old Farts and Lots of Fun

Where has it gone? When will it be back? Perhaps never!

Seems like all the **fun** has gone out of the motor racing world as it enters the trillion dollar regime and everyone is very muzzled by corporate correctness and media savvy. Not that the current global recession won't make them shake in their boots a bit and damn good thing too!

I just can't see the current Formula one drivers loosening up like the old farts did when they were off duty. Graham Hill, Innes Ireland and Sir Stirling Moss, to name but a few were frequently seen 'in drag' for worthy charities and good looking legs they all had and fun dripped from every pore, laughter was the order of the day. I somehow can't see Alonso or Hamilton in a caftan and a pair of wedgies cavorting around a ballroom floor in the arms of a fellow male driver for a worthy charity. I guess they might do it in private though! ~ Just joking!

I mean just look at the managers and owners . . . Bernie Ecclestone, Norbert Haug, Martin Whitmarsh, Ron Dennis and Frank Williams boring looking lot if you ask me. Too much money and too much responsibility in the super high stakes game gets you long faces like that and no time for fun. Max Mosley however seems to have some fun though but I'm not going

to touch that subject . . . way over my head! *Naughty boy!*

'Fun', like fair interest rates and a rational stock market is a lost commodity. It has been replaced by corporate behaviour and boring sponsorship manners that have stripped those human beings of their humanness. Gone are the days when the entire grid started off in pre-ordained reverse at a club race startling the flag marshal and yes it did happen led by 'Black' Jack Brabham no less. Gone are the days when on the race meeting closest to Christmas (Boxing Day usually) selected drivers appeared resplendent in Santa's hat over their crash helmets complete with red noses on!

We are not here for a long time in the grand scheme of things; four score or so but not much longer in the best of deals and it seems to me that to be sour faced and boring runs against the basic principles of life . . . What was it we carved in stone, or tried to . . ." and the pursuit of happiness"? Well now it is the pursuit of money and greed and that's about it. Can't take it with you as they say and can't even take good laughter either to the Promised Land so enjoy yourselves now for heaven's sakes. That is one thing the VRCBC can do in spades is race safely (or relatively so ~ *people really must learn to understand*

turn one at Mission Raceway Park!) and have some good old fashioned fun in the process.

Read the old fart autobiographies as opposed to the new ones and you will see that different world at work right before your eyes. Like **"Life at the Limit"** by Graham Hill (*our current VRCBC pin up ~ what a fun guy he was*) and **"Faster"** by Sir Jackie Stewart O.B.E. and **"It Beats Working"** by Eoin Young. They all have wonderful and funny stories to tell even though their lives were frequently shadowed by fear, death and injury . . . I think there is a connection here! I call it the 'blitz syndrome'. Londoners during the terrible bombings of 1939 to 1945 all kept their spirits high and their sense of humour very much alive despite everything going on around them. Today, in peace and what used to be prosperity before stock market greed set in, I can't say that I have had a damn good laugh in quite a while.

I guess it's easier to party up if you are under a lot of physical pressure by telling yourself that you might not



be around to enjoy it for long but leaving all that aside can you imagine the fun they had at Corkoran Road, Surbiton in Surrey (England ~ not here!) at a communal living quarters nicknamed 'The Castle'? Eoin Young recalls "There was one memorable party after the Guards Trophy in 1964 when all the Americans turned up ~ A.J.Foyt, Roger Penske, Walt Hansgen and John Mecom as well as all the top U.K. drivers and on the stately sweeping staircase, to add British flare to the scene as the party reached cruising altitude ~ Jimmy Clark donned a breast plate and so did Graham Hill and they grabbed swords and helmets and had a full duel" . . . pickled out of their trees no doubt . . . What fun. Bruce and Patty McLaren lived close by and soon joined in along with Chris Amon, Peter Revson and Mike Hailwood . . . Ohmigod can't you just see it! Can't see them doing that at a SOVREN meeting sadly, although there are some SOVREN members that are keeping the fun spirit alive and they know who they are, and thank God I do too!

Well we do try to have fun when we can in the VRCBC and long may it last! My good chum Ian Wood and I will always try our best to be as silly ~ off the track ~ as we can to keep the smiles alive in the paddock. You really will live longer for knowing us as laughter is a proven stress reducer and stress is the biggest 'killer' around! Trust me on that one!



Graham Hill at the Nurburgring in 1962. We are not sure exactly what he doing but we don't think it could happen today.
Langton-Adams photo

Long life to you all and
lots of fun you old farts!
. . . Oh yes . . . and a
Happy Christmas too!

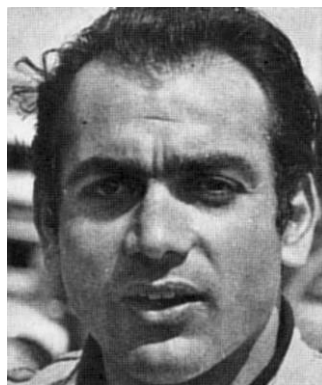


Three road racers inducted by Greater Vancouver Motorsport Pioneers Society

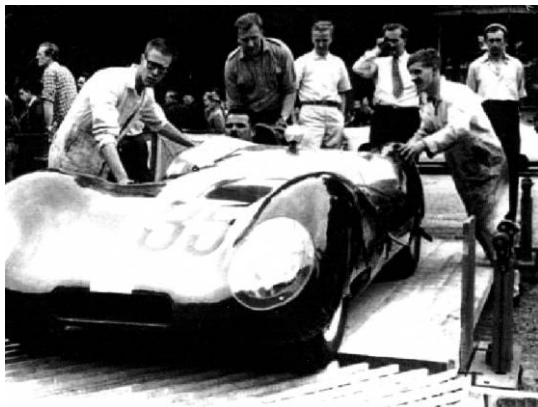
October 19 was the date of the 2008 Greater Vancouver Motorsport Pioneers Society Induction ceremony. Among the 13 inductees were three pioneer road racing personalities all veterans of the Westwood Racing Circuit



Gio Coletta Alfa driver of note



Vince Howlett Westwood announcer - still at it today



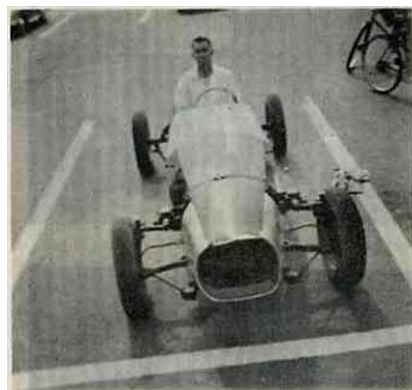
Merv Therriault ex Team Lotus and SCCBC stalwart



HMR Germania makes cover of November Victory Lane Magazine



Cover photo by Paul Bonner
Article by Mike Gee
Thanks Guys



BOB MAC CANADA CLASS SPECIAL - CALGARY 1959



Market Place

A new service for VRCBC members selling cars of historic interest

1961 ELVA MK6 SPORTS RACER

Chassis number 10, one of only 28 Mk6s made. The car has been raced on the West Coast of the USA and Canada since new. During the 60s the body was replaced by a Bruihl body.. The current owner bought the car in 1982 and rebuilt it to become a vintage race car. It regularly ran successfully in vintage races at Westwood, Seattle, Portland, Olympia, Tacoma, Calgary and Mission from 1984 until 2007 The car is powered by a 1600cc Alfa engine.

Price: \$49,000. U.S.

Further details contact Leigh Anderson, 604-536-5292 or leighand@shaw.ca



I'm selling my 1965 E-Type coupe race car. Rotisserie restoration, extensive mods, 375 hp., Webers, extensive lightening. Car does 1:28's at Portland. Trailer included. \$55,000 U.S. Call for photos & more specs. Terry Sturgeon 250 370 2299 terrysturgeon@telus.net



All British Field Meet Seeks Cars

Email received from ABFM organizer Patrick Stewart pstewart@westerndriver.com

Tom

I don't know of any local Morgan Mini or Alpine race cars but no doubt you do. Would like to invite them to display next year at ABFM as part of the HMR exhibit and Westwood 50.

Any suggestions?.

Cheers

Patrick

Can anyone help?
PS I assume he means Sunbeam Alpines not the French Alpine.



Cosworth 4wd F1 car



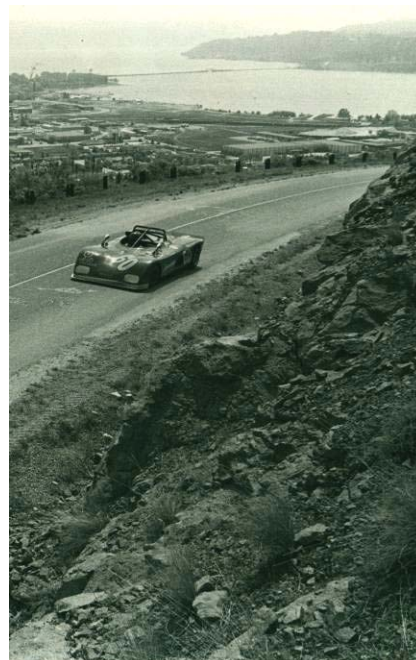
Gilles



The first March racing car 683 F3

Tom's Photo Page

March racing cars



Ian Wood's 73S



Tom's 719 Formula Ford



Villeneuve March 75B



Ric Forest March 722 Formula B



March 717 Can-Am car



Villeneuve 77B



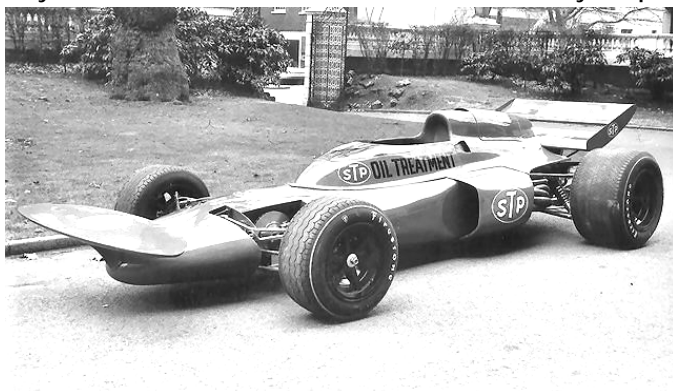
Leyton House 861 F1



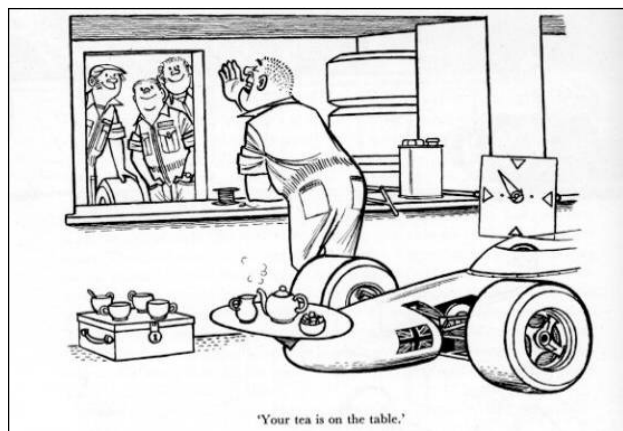
Keith Gray's Super Vee



Bill Brack 79B Atlantic



Ill-fated Costin designed 711 Formula One car



Canada's only domestically built Formula 1 car



Peter Broeker in his Stebro F1 car *(Canadian Motorsport Hall of Fame archives)*

In the early 1960s, Peter Broeker of Montreal the proprietor of a well known after-market performance exhaust system manufacturer known as Stebro was building Formula Junior cars for the then new Formula.

In 1963, Formula One was in its second season of the 1500 cc engine regulation. The most popular motor for Formula Junior at the time was the 1100 cc Ford four cylinder based on the English made Anglia 105E design. Broeker planted a tweaked and slightly larger displacement 1500 cc version of a Formula Junior motor into one of his cars and entered the US Grand Prix at Watkins Glen.

Qualifying 21 and last, Broeker persevered in the

race and finished 7th in the race albeit 22 laps behind the winner Graham Hill in the works BRM.

Broeker wasn't last, he did beat Jo Bonnier who was a further three laps behind in his ailing Cooper-Climax.

You might think that this was a classic back marker effort and maybe it was but it wasn't until a fellow

Quebecer Gilles Villeneuve came along that any Canadian finished higher in a world Championship Grand Prix despite quite a few better financed attempts.

Even to this day the Stebro remains the only truly Canadian made F1 to ever contest such a race (the semi Canadian Wolf cars were actually made in the UK).



The car still exists and can be seen at VARAC events *(VARAV photo)*

About the Vintage Racing Club of BC

The purpose of the Club is to restore, race and exchange information concerning vintage sports and racing automobiles. The Club was established in 1976 by a group of Vancouver based friends as a means of sharing with others their enthusiasm for racing and appreciation of the incredible vintage racing machines of

bygone days. The Vintage Racing Club supports the philosophy of racing competition that encourages participation, sportsmanship and display of the vehicle in its natural state on the track. There are no prizes or trophies, merely the great enjoyment of a well prepared vintage racing machine at speed.

News

The 2009 HMR tentatively scheduled for July is to feature cars that raced at the legendary Westwood Racing Circuit. The event will run in conjunction with Westwood 50 a celebration of the first race at Westwood some 50 years prior on July 26, 1959.



Photo Caption Contest

Submit entry to editor Tom Johnston at tomjohnston@shaw.ca Winner will be announced in next issue

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