



November 2018

Issue No. 331

The Journal of The Vintage Sports Car Club of Western Australia (Inc.)

VINTAGE METAL

www.vscwa.com.au

2018 PITTSBURGH VINTAGE GRAND PRIX



Maureen Matune photograph

PLUS: Coalfields 500 Photo Gallery
Trendsetting Lancia D50
Red Dust Revival Update
Book Review: Specialist British Sports/Racers

Annual General Meeting: Monday 5th November 2018

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Rudi Glarner and his BMW 2002 lead the field down to the start. Mike Matune

2018 PITTSBURGH VINTAGE GRAND PRIX

WORDS AND PICTURES BY MIKE AND MAUREEN MATUNE

The VSCC is justly proud of its record of running round the houses regularity events, first at York and in later years at Albany, Narrogin and Northam. However, there are other closed road historic motor sports events around the world, the most famous being the Grand Prix de Monaco Historique, but this is a description of an American closed roads event, the Pittsburgh Vintage Grand Prix, run annually in the heart of Pittsburgh Pennsylvania. This description and photographs come from internationally known husband and wife team, Mike and Maureen Matune. Note that this is a race meeting, over a track bounded by stone walls and straw bales. CAMS would have a fit...



Mike Moore leads Russ Kolesar ... for now! Both are driving Triumph TR4s. Maureen Matune

For fifty-one weekends a year, Schenley Park serves as a pastoral oasis in the middle of the thriving metropolis of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. But on that fifty-second weekend, the vintage racing circus descends upon the park with a vengeance. An army of dedicated, long-term volunteers sets up and tears down a race circuit in what seems like the blink of an eye. Their efforts benefit the Autism Society of Pittsburgh and the Merakey Allegheny Valley School, two very deserving local charities. So loyal is this army that many return year after year, all for little more than a thank you and a mention in the



Karl Hughes exits the haybale chicane on the back straight in his 1973 BMW 2002. *Mike Matune*

Racing isn't the only thing to see in Schenley Park that weekend. A large car show is held adjacent to the Schenley Park track on the Bob O'Connor Golf Course. Numerous marque clubs and manufacturers show an eclectic array of machinery, new and old. On Friday night during the Forbes Avenue of Speed, the public is invited to watch the cars parade into town and walk among the rows



Robert Finkel (MGA #58), Jim Arnett (Mini #27) and Nial McCabe (Midget #909) negotiate Turn 13 with "German Hill" and the Cathedral of Learning rising behind them. *Mike Matune*

programme.

For their part, scores of racers travel to the Park to accept the challenge of one of the most unforgiving tracks on the vintage calendar. Laid out over 2.33 miles of normal Park streets, the track rises and falls some 140 feet, twisting its way past all manner of stone walls, sewer openings, utility poles, and such. Old growth trees provide for uneven lighting across the entire circuit adding to the "fun". Incorporating twenty turns and a haybale chicane, there is no place to let up. A long-time racer commented that in some places it acts like a race track, in others, like something he has never seen.



Alan Patterson and his 1952 Allard J2X lead Frank Mount's 1939 MGTB Special. Note the stone wall and straw bales. *Mike Matune*

of parked racers while drivers enjoy a private reception.

Hardly a newcomer to the vintage racing scene, Schenley Park traces its origins as a race course to 1983. Twenty years later, it was joined by a vintage race at Pittsburgh International Race Complex (PIRC), a natural terrain, purpose-built track about forty miles North. The two races bookend a week of car events ranging from formal affairs such as the Black Tie & Tailpipes Gala and Jet Center Party, to a rally, countryside tour and numerous car shows. In all, it encompasses a ten-day celebration of the automobile.

You should make your plans to attend the 2019 running of the PVGP as a spectator, volunteer or competitor. Dates have been set for July 12 through 21, 2019. You won't be disappointed.

Further information can be found at <http://www.pvvp.org/>.



Joe Bojalad and his oh-so-quick 1960 Elva Mark VI. *Mike Matune*



Joe Mendel and his 1971 Lotus Elan are hounded by Brian Dolan (GT6) and Joe Bojalad (Elva Mark VI). *Mike Matune*



Charlie Dolan is all alone out front in his 1957 MGA. *Mike Matune*



Frank Mount holds his 1939 MG TB Special hard against the curbing in "Westinghouse Corner". *Mike Matune*



◀As Ian Wisbon (#17 Austin Mini) chases Nial McCabe (MG Midget #909) on track, the German car faithful exhibit their Teutonic treasures on "German Hill". *Mike Matune*

▶ Kevin Michael has one eye on that stone wall to his left and the other on James Wisbon's BMW 2002 behind as he pushes his Volvo 544 through a corner. *Mike Matune*





Lee Poseidon and his Alfa Romeo GTV motor past a watchful corner worker. *Mike Matune*



Michael Schindel holds the front inside wheel of his Porsche 911 high as he corners. Behind him Robert Ball and his BMW 2002 stay in close contact. *Mike Matune*



Gary Scholtz negotiates Turn 19 in his Porsche 914-6. *Mike Matune*



Bearing the name of one the charities benefited by the PVGP, Monroe Snider's MGA moves down the hill. *Mike Matune*



A corner worker reports the progress of Stefan Vapaa and his SAAB Sonett as they race around the circuit. *Mike Matune*



► The Swedes battle it out as a SAAB Sonett (Stefan Vapaa) chases a Volvo P1800 (Ward Dolaman). *Mike Matune*



Now here's one you don't see every day, a 1963 Triumph Herald piloted by Jerry Barker. *Mike Matune*



Dave Nicholas is all arms as he moves onto the Start/Finish straight in his MGA aptly nicknamed "Honeybee". *Mike Matune*



Mark Maehling explains the intricacies of his Abarth Scorpione SS to some young race fans during the "Forbes Avenue of Speed". *Maureen Matune*



Dave Thomas and his AH Sprite negotiate the corner of E. Circuit Road and Serpentine Drive at the end of "Flamingo Gulch". *Maureen Matune*



▲ An Elva Courier (Nate Scigliano), MGA (David Holmes) and MG Midget (Nial McCabe) all travel in close quarters. *Maureen Matune*

► James Wisbon pushes his BMW 2002 hard. *Maureen Matune*

