

THE ALLARD REGISTER

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THE BULLETIN

MAY/JUNE, 1975

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We are delighted to announce that another famous Allard racing driver of the early 1950's, Mr. William M. Pollack, has recently joined the Register. Bill drove the J2 Allard owned by member Tom Carstens in many races on the West Coast of America and gained many victories in this Cadillac engined car from Reno, Nevada to Golden Gate Park, California. We hope to receive further communications from him about his racing experiences for inclusion in future issues of The Bulletin. We take this opportunity of thanking him for the fine photographs he has sent us of himself in action at Golden Gate Park.

Interesting note: In a letter from new member Mr. R. C. Rehfeld of Oakland, California he writes: "The 1951 Allard J2 which I have owned for the last 15 years is the well-known # 14 Carstens/Pollack Allard".

We are extremely pleased to hear that this famous car has turned up again. ED.

We wish to thank member Mr. J. R. Allard of Yakima, Washington for sending us a magnificent calendar for 1975, issued by TRW Inc. of 8001 East Pleasant Valley Road, Cleveland, Ohio. The month of September shows an Allard J2X in action. Under the picture it mentions that "the J2X must be a collector's item owing to the fact of the small number produced. The 'X' signified 'extended', meaning that chassis adjustments had been made to the famous J2 to accommodate long legged drivers. The J2X was exactly what it looked like; a veritable brute. It dominated racing in its day and was capable of reaching racing speeds with only the slightest encouragement. Its one weakness was a poor suspension design that made steering a chore. But as one enthusiast has observed, 'A busy driver is a happy driver'".

We have received from member Bob Forsyth of Upland, California, photocopies of three pages from the Illustrated Encyclopedia of the Motor Car, "The World of Automobiles", Volume 1. One of the photos shows our Hon. Secretary competing in a speed hill climb at Shelsley Walsh in his Palm Beach Mark 2 (Jaguar engine). There is also a photo of the late Sydney Allard in his hill-climb special. The photos and information would appear to be similar to that which appeared in "On Four Wheels". The "World of Automobiles" is printed in Great Britain and Distributed by Columbia House, 51 West 52nd Street, New York, New York 10019, U.S.A.

Many thanks, Bob, for sending us these photostats. ED.

Our Hon. Secretary recently returned from the Continent of Europe and he writes as follows:-

"Whilst in the South of France, my wife and I stopped off one Sunday at the Paul Ricard motor racing circuit, which is at Le Castellet, not far from Marseille. We arrived at lunchtime and found that a Mobiloil Economy event was in progress. It was very strange to be on a racing circuit and not to have the noises of racing and sports car engines being warmed up. The cars were all closed four-seaters ranging from a Mini through to a 3 litre B.M.W. and were manhandled from the petrol pumps to the starting grid for the afternoon session. At the fall of the flag the entire field started off in a quiet and orderly fashion, and the only noise to be heard as they came around was the squeal of the tyres on the bends as drivers endeavoured to maintain a steady speed without using brakes or altering the position of the accelerator control. It was rather unusual to see that there were racing drivers Jean-Pierre Beltoise, Henri Pescarolo, and rally ace Henri Greder competing. Our impression of the day was that there was more noise in the restaurant at lunchtime than on the circuit!"

SEBRING, 1950 by Jean Davidson. Part II (Conclusion)

So, well broken-in by now, car and driver reached Sebring for the last training sessions. My mechanic who was to co-drive arrived by plane, but club members suggested they did not want a former professional dirt-track driver in this race; it

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was decided that one George Weaver of Boston, Mass. would be the co-pilot.

Weaver's right hand was covered with nicotine, he smoked cigarettes straight on and drank straight gin, but he drove a straighter line, while the engine would scream its guts out. He was more experienced and knew the track a lot better than I did. He immediately clocked an excellent time. Exhausted by the 15 hour drive, most owners had come down by plane, my time was foul- about 15 seconds slower than the fastest - although the machine was well among the very fastest!

I knew little about veering amid gasoline drums on long cement airplane runways and considered quitting. A bum grip and a fever topped my disgust. But Weaver loved racing and would not allow me to drop out. Finally, I told my mechanic:

"Huey, you put this car together, what do we do?"

"Don't worry, when the flag drops it will do something to you and that J2 will be right up there".

The trouble was that the flag only dropped once before for me. At Watkins Glen in upper New York State. In the excitement, I sprang out of a 30 car pack to chase after Erwin Goldschmidt, the fastest Allard then and here at Sebring, and also after this fellow George Weaver, now my team-mate. So bizarre were American Sports Car racing rules in the 1950's that Weaver at the Glen was running a rebuilt blown Grand Prix 3 litre Maserati that churned at about 7,000 rpm. Goldschmidt and he had shot up front from the start, while I clung for dear life a few dozen yards behind. I soon found myself on the very first lap looking at their goggles while driving abreast in a long radius curve. Maybe I should have looked at the road, because I soon let it go by, like an airplane, jumping into hay bales and a tall tree (in which the car remained stuck for the entire race) without much harm to man or machine. I had plenty of time to unbuckle my safety belt and slide down the tree onto the road before the fellow in number 4 position came chugging along the bend.

But Rout and Weaver convinced me to try again. Rout was insistent that I drive the first two hours.

"If somebody has to break this bus on which I laboured, Jean, I'd much rather you'd take first chance once more and if its still in there after two hours, George will then do his best and we might win, who knows?"

So, the cars were hauled to the starting ground. Angry at having been rejected as a driver, Rout tore out of the SAC hangar at full throttle, aimed at a gasoline drum, skidded cleanly around it twice, to stop the car at the proper angle and in perfect position. By now the crowd packing the stands as well as race officials were well-acquainted with number 79.

They gave us the starting flag and all ran in Le Mans fashion to the cars. Then and there I made the wisest decision I ever made in my short racing career. Let 'em run. I walked calmly to the car and peeled off last! I would build up my confidence by gobbling the smaller machines one by one, until I reached the bigger fellows or they started nibbling at my tail pipe from the rear'.

It would be impossible for me to tell you the precise nature of the curves or describe my technique, but I immediately overtook a dozen smaller machines, hitting a right angle so fast, I barely made it. Any car in front of me exerted a powerful attraction, a sort of surrealistic suction, that made up for technique. I was literally sucked into the rear of preceding cars, like a pin attracted by a magnet, but unlike a pin, I'd shoot past and keep going - this was exciting.

The Jags offered no resistance, the Porsches faded away, the Aston Martins barely managed to work themselves up to 115 mph on the one mile straightaway; they were pushed far behind.

But none of the big boys were to be seen. Goldschmidt, Wacker and Walters had jumped up front, hell-bent for leather at the flag, as if this was a 10 mile sprint and someone would have to let go. Someone did and it was not an Allard. Walter's Cadillac-Healey's radiator proved far too small.

It was boiling like mad at the pits, this encouraged me considerably. As I went by the vapour, Hubert Rout and the French press attaché, Jean Beube, gave me a big S sign. It meant: you are doing well, go a bit slower.

On the next lap, I saw a big 3.02 which meant I was lapping 12 seconds slower than the absolute record on a deserted track! This was an encouragement, it relaxed me, but far from slowing me down it pumped more speed into me. The next time round I was pleased to read 3.01 and in front of me there was a red two-seater that looked like nothing I had overtaken yet. I could have gobbled it up in the one mile straight of the strategic airport, but tagged behind it a bit to see if I could deal with it in the big S bend in front of the stands. Maybe I wanted to show off, maybe I wanted to encourage my supporters. This, I did, the Allard was tremendous on the broad curves, you could melt your tyres like cheese in a frying pan, cock the steering, push the throttle, and you were driving a combination outboard, car and motorcycle - good enough to shoot past gentleman Jim Kimberley, in his flaming red drivers suit and

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redder Ferrari. Maybe he blushed too. It made me feel good because there was another Ferrari up front, which I overtook in the straightaway, half airborne in a cross wind, the front wheels lifting a bit in wonderful and characteristic J2 fashion (the subsequent J2X was more evenly distributed and less fun). So Spears disappeared in turn and by the time I reached the stands, I caught sight of a blue flash that made quite a roar for a 2.5 litre, this was Luigi Chinetti in the rebored 2.7 litre, as good a time as ever to demonstrate my front axle was doing alright. I literally flew past him in the straight. By now, I was getting proud, there were only two cars in front, Erwin Goldschmidt and Fred Wacker's. One hour or so had gone by, and three Cad-Allards were up front, 1,2,3; far superior to anything on that 1950 track. Magnificent machines with big deep breathing American engines, barely tricky enough to make you feel good when you had tamed them ... For the first time, I felt we had a reasonable chance of winning.

I was not being too hard on the machine, sliding the tyres rather than hitting the brakes and avoiding all unnecessary over-revs. The Allard was running like compressed oil in a silken duet.

However, most of my blood drained from me, when despite this performance and with only two cars ahead of me in a 60-car field, Hubert Rout waved frantically at me for the second time around. My tongue glued to the roof of my mouth, Fangio chewed gum to avoid this but I did not know this trick at the time. Although drenched in sweat, my feet got cold, the sign they were waving at me said: 3.01.F. This meant, you are within two seconds of the training lap record BUT THIS IS NOT FAST ENOUGH. I nearly missed a curve, ugly telegraph poles came for a close call, I managed to zig-zag by. Who was going faster than I was for my pit to give me the goose. Some guy must be revving in 2.58, maybe. I strained my eyes but saw nothing in the rear-view mirror. It was time to brake and swerve right, and just then, less than a mile off, in the sun, I saw a tiny red spot - Erwin Goldschmidt's Allard. He had shaken off Wacker and was trying to do to me what I had done to 57 others! Despite two hours of thunderous work, he was intent on gobbling me up and I could feel my car pulling him towards me. I overshot nervously slower machines in the no-passing zone, a picture was taken of me in the process and I was nearly disqualified later. But for four laps the Goldschmidt Allard did not gain a single yard - it was the same red spot at the same spot.

My pit gave me no further orders, I regained composure on the next lap around, I bounced by a burning car. A red car enveloped in smoke. It was Erwin's machine. The driver had got out safely and it would be sheer hypocrisy to claim I felt sorry for him or for Tom Cole his brilliant co-pilot, one of the best on any Cad or Chrysler-Allard. To our regret he killed himself later at Le Mans, in a Ferrari.

So, two of the main threats had disappeared, Fred Wacker alone was leading us. By then, I was exhausted and so were the tyres and I stopped for refuelling and to hand over the wheel to this devilish fox-terrier from Boston, George Weaver.

Weaver pulled out on Wacker's trail going considerably faster than an elephant's foot on wet oilcloth. We were afraid he'd bust the machine, and two hours later an exhausted Weaver handed me back the machine, at night, in first spot.

At the first curve, I nearly spun off, I pressed on the brakes before hitting the curve, but the pedal kept going down and nothing happened. George had left no brakes. I just double-declutched in time to avoid a catastrophe. This was not easy either. George is a powerful fox-terrier in a racing car, he had bent out of shape the relatively tough steel lever - it was difficult readjusting to the new position of the gear knob. The engine then started sputtering - I had closed the electric gas pump while jumping in. I switched it back on and the motor purred again. Readjusted to what remained of the brakes and to the new position of the gear lever, I was still ahead of Wacker, but was soon pulled back into the pit because white streaks showed on the rear tyres which we had omitted to change in order to keep our lead. The change was barely completed when Wacker overtook us. Weaver chased him for the last hour without quite closing the gap. The two Cad-Allards, that of Wacker and ours had lapped the entire field for a conclusive team victory.

On Monday, I drove the J2 all the way back to Washington, D.C. and was only fined in Georgia for going 80 mph - this took care of the extra money sent by my office.

Very many thanks, Jean, for this fine contribution to The Bulletin. ED.

WANTED

Right rear fender for Allard K2. Contact, as soon as possible, Ray A. McLaughlin, 7801 Denise Circle, La-Palma, California 90623. U.S.A.

We extend a very warm welcome to the following new members:-

Ray A. McLaughlin	of La-Palma, California, U.S.A.	K2.
R. C. Rehfeld	" Oakland, California, U.S.A.	J2 (Carsten/Follack)