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Chapter 1

1950 – The early days

America had emerged from World War II some four years prior to the beginning of the 1950s, but the reverberations of that conflict still impacted upon the American public in every aspect of commercial and social life. Ever so slowly, the pain and loss of loved ones had eased, and people were turning to interests that could have only been dreamed of four years previously.

Small but dedicated bands of car enthusiasts had created a number of small clubs across America, and it was through these clubs that motor races in various forms had been organised and run in a fashion during the late 1940s. Sanctions for the races came through the American Automobile Association. Oval racing, sprints and time trials were the order of the day, until one man, Cameron Argetsinger, had the foresight and verve to organise a road race at Watkins Glen in October 1948, similar in principle to those

held prior to World War II in different parts of the country. The revival of road racing in North America had happened, sparking the interest of other individuals to duplicate this form of racing at various venues nationwide. A road race was organised at Bridgehampton in 1949, in addition to a second event at Watkins Glen in that year.

By the advent of 1950 the organisation of the sport was still fragmented, though even more venues were appearing on the calendar. Races at Watkins Glen and Bridgehampton were repeated, and sports car races introduced at Suffolk County airport and Linden airport. There were even sports car features at traditional short track racing venues, such as Langhorne Speedway and Thompson Speedway, to help reinforce the success of road racing's postwar revival.

Thompson Speedway was first used by the SCCA for sports car events



Ferrari 166 SC #18 driven by George Rand at Bridgehampton in 1949. Rand failed to finish in the 100-mile race due to an oil line failure. (Courtesy Michael Eaton)



The Allard K1-Ford #26 was driven by Larry Kulok at Bridgehampton in 1949. (Courtesy Michael Eaton)



First row of the start grid for the Inskip Trophy race, won by Bob Said.
(David Ash collection, courtesy Michael Eaton)



Line-up for the Inskip Trophy race for MGs. (David Ash collection, courtesy Michael Eaton)

experiment with the handicap system for the Charles Miller Trophy race in 1951 had proved too cumbersome, and had been replaced by more conventional races with cars allocated into generally accepted classes. The confidence of the MG Club was vindicated by the reported 10,000 spectators (*Motor Sports World*) who turned up to watch the six races held in 90-degree heat. The *Bethlehem Globe-Times* newspaper report stated 5000 spectators, though the detail was unimportant as admission to the races was free. Depending on which source is to be believed, between 90 and 102 cars entered the races held on the 1.6-mile concrete and macadam course on the airport's runways.

It would appear that despite advertising a ladies' race to begin at 9.00am, no such event took place, possibly due to a lack of entries. The first race held over 15 laps was for novice drivers and attracted a variety of cars that in any other circumstances would have been considered by many to be unevenly matched with one another. Dispersed among the MGs was a Ferrari, a Cisitalia a Siata and a Willys Jeepster. It appeared to make no difference to the end result though, as the first three cars across the finish line were all MGs, the winning car driven by James Shields. The second race was an all MG affair for senior drivers, attracting at least 12 entrants and run over 20 laps of the course. The winner was Boris Said in his MG TC, followed by Bill Kinchloe in an MG TD.

The third race for classes G and H modified cars only had six entries for the 20-lap race, and was won comfortably by Ken Denston in a Cisitalia, followed by Paul Hessler in a Siata and Donald Sauvigne driving a Crosley.

Race four for classes D and E resulted in a win for Lawrence Kulok driving a Frazer-Nash ahead of Benett and Stiles, both driving MGs, whilst the fifth race brought together class B and C cars, with at least 11 entrants. The inverted grid had a rolling start behind a pace car, and after coming through the field the Cunningham C4RK driven by Phil Walters managed a rare win ahead of two Allards driven by Erwin Goldschmidt and John Negley. The class C Healey-Silverstone of Hansgen retired, and McNought failed to finish the race having rolled his Jaguar.

The feature race of the event was the 30-lap Charles Miller Memorial race, open to cars of less than 1500cc. There were nine cars on the start grid, four each of Porsche and MG and one

1954 results

Thompson Raceway, 25 April, 1954
(SCCA New England region)



Race 1 10 laps Race distance 15 miles Class C Starters 8

Race winner's time 14min 17 secs Average speed 63.51mph

15	Jaguar XK120 M		Crusoe J	1oa 1cl C
17	Jaguar XK120 M		Perrin R	2oa 2cl C
43	Jaguar XK120		Caldwell M	3oa 3cl C
22	Jaguar XK120		Simmons A	4oa 4cl C
16	Jaguar XK120		McComb D	5oa 5cl C
32	Jaguar XK120 M		Boylan D	6oa 6cl C
46	Jaguar XK120		Puleston R	7oa 7cl C
18	Jaguar XK120		Turchon P	Dnf

Race 2 10 laps Race distance 15 miles Class D, E & FM Starters 8

Race winner's time 13min 51.7sec Average speed 66.62mph

5	Bandini		Pauley J	1oa 1cl FM
20	Bandini		Merrill R	2oa 2cl FM
9	Kieft-Bristol		Ceresole P	3oa 1cl E
10	Austin-Healey 100		Deane C	4oa 1cl D
54	BMW 328		Ewing M	5oa 2cl E
59	Morgan Plus 4		Ferguson J	6oa 3cl E
37	Siata Diana Grand Sport		Weinman M	7oa 4cl E
6	Austin-Healey 100		Simonds H	8oa 2cl D

Race 3 10 laps Race distance 15 miles Class F Starters 14

Race winner's time 14min 47.9sec Average speed 62.15mph

30	Porsche 356 Super		Lawrence C	1oa 1cl F
41	Porsche 356 Super		Fleming W	2oa 2cl F
39	Porsche 356 America		Baker R	3oa 3cl F
50	Porsche 356		Bemis A	4oa 4cl F
38	Porsche 356		Bell D	5oa 5cl F
40	MG TD		Davidson M	6oa 6cl F
27	MG TD		Bastrup L	7oa 7cl F
47	MG TD		Jelinek O	8oa 8cl F
35	MG TD		Rockwell S	9oa 9cl F
60	MG TD		Stoddard G	10oa 10cl F
55	MG TD		Perry H	
33	Porsche 356		Joy R	
48	Porsche 356 Super		Graham J	
49	Porsche 356		McNally D	

Race 4 10 laps Race distance 15 miles Class CM & U Starters 6

Race winner's time 13min 39.1sec Average speed 67.21mph

2	Allard J2 Cadillac		Gray P	1oa 1cl Un
48	Maserati V8 RI Chrysler	4501	Cade P	2oa 2cl Un
89	Cisitalia D46 monoposto		Ceresole P	3oa 3cl Un
15	Jaguar XK120 M		Crusoe J	4oa 1cl C
42	Jaguar XK120 M		Knight J Dr	5oa 2cl C
19	Chevrolet Special		Austin A	6oa 3cl C

Race 5 10 laps Race distance 15 miles Class H & HM Starters 8

Race winner's time 14min 24.7sec Average speed 63.2mph

74	PBX Special		Poole C	1oa 1cl HM
4	Bandini		Rudkin H	2oa 2cl HM
7	PBS Crosley Special		Stetson H	3oa 1cl H
26	Crosley		Deshon R	4oa 2cl H
44	Bandini		Raymond A	5oa 3cl HM
58	Morris Minor		Hoffman J	6oa 3cl H
45	Nardi Spyder		Vitale D	Dnf
56	Volkswagen Special s/c		Rutan C	Dnf

Suffolk County AFB, 9 May, 1954
(SCCA New York region)



Race 1 25 laps Race distance 38.75 miles * Class unrestricted Starters 40

Track assumed to be 1.55 miles in length.

Race winner's time Average speed

21	Jaguar XK120 M		Boss R	1oa 1cl C
4	Jaguar XK120		Hansgen W	2oa 2cl C
33	Jaguar XK120		Crusoe J	3oa 3cl C
44	Nardi Spyder		Vitale D	1cl HM
77	Siata 300BC 750 Spyder	ST 435 BC	Bentley J	1cl GM
48	Porsche 356 Super		Graham J	1cl F
73	Austin-Healey 100 S	3505	Allen F	1cl D
2	Bandini Crosley		Raymond A	
6	Giaur		Dominianni F	
7	Jaguar XK120 M		Lavac H	
11	Jaguar XK120		Sparacino P	
13	Pegaso Z-102		Hannaway B	
17	Jaguar XK120 M		Janis C	
23	Jaguar XK120 M		Constantine G	
24	Jaguar XK120		Heller D	
26	Porsche 356 1500		Powell S	



Ed Martin's Ferrari 315S in the paddock at Watkins Glen draws a few admiring glances. The car finished second in the Glen Classic race. (Courtesy Dave Nicholas)



Homer Dasey leads another Corvette and two Jaguars during the fifth race at Watkins Glen. Dasey would finish in fourth position overall. (Courtesy T Hendley)