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## CAR CLUB NEWS

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*On the scene since 1990!*

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# Petit the grand finale

**10-hour race at Road Atlanta closes inaugural Tudor season, but ends in disappointment for TRG-AMR and OAK Racing**

by Bruce Vild

**BRASELTON, Ga., Oct. 2-4** — The 14th and final round of the 2014 Tudor United SportsCar Championship was the ten-hour endurance contest known as Petit Le Mans, taking place at Road Atlanta the first weekend in October. Fifty-six cars competed, ranging from prototypes to GTs spread over the series' four classes, and while there were no real surprises as to who won the Championship when the dust settled (it was Joao Barbosa and Christian Fittipaldi, with 349 points each), this year's Petit was remarkable for the number of full-course cautions it produced and all the team strategies that had to be adjusted accordingly — and often brilliantly, even when victory was obviously out of reach.

Such was the case for the only team fielding a British car in the race, TRG-AMR. Once again they were positioned well, having achieved their fourth pole in the GT Daytona class in as many races at the hands of James Davison, a feat unmatched by any other driver in the series. However, by the first yellow flag, about 14 minutes into the race, the team's #007 Aston Martin V12 Vantage had dropped four positions. Through the subsequent green and a second yellow at 51 minutes the car was running 6th; pitting for tires, fuel and a driver change to David Block, #007 was down to 14th by the time the car was handed off to TRG's third driver, Christina Nielsen, about three quarters of an hour later.

Nielsen, who had also been racing for NGT Motorsport in the two Porsche GT3 Cup Challenge races that weekend, was then called upon to do a double stint in the Aston while several other GTD cars were pitting, and, doing some canny driving besides, began advancing through the field. She brought the car up to 4th in class before Davison



Bad luck for TRG-AMR again as #007 just did not keep the pace it set in qualifying.

Photo by Brian Cleary

took over again.

A podium finish, sadly, was not to be, and the problems with the car would overshadow whatever fuel management, driver change or other pit strategy the crew could devise.

Even before Nielsen's session, team owner Kevin Buckler had revealed to race commentator Chris Neville that the Aston was down on power. As Neville told the television audience, "They've got telemetry issues, so they're not getting a good read on the car. They're trying to figure out whether they've got a cylinder down, if they've got some type of electrical issue — a lot of question marks for a team."

Davison, at one point running 7th in class, faced three more cautions (including one following the wreck of car #42,

OAK Racing's Ligier-Honda) and did some great driving on his own to move the car back to 4th, when Nielsen took the wheel again. But the car's problems had not gone away. While the Aston could hold its position in heavy traffic under green, when the field opened up it simply could not cope.

When Nielsen handed the car over to Block she was down to 8th. Block drove valiantly for a little more than an hour before the final driver change to Davison, who finished the race in 10th.

After the race, Nielsen confirmed the car was not running on all 12 cylinders, accounting for a loss of 40-50hp  
(See More Petit, page 19)

### Inside...

**Hilton Head Island Concours**

*...and more!*

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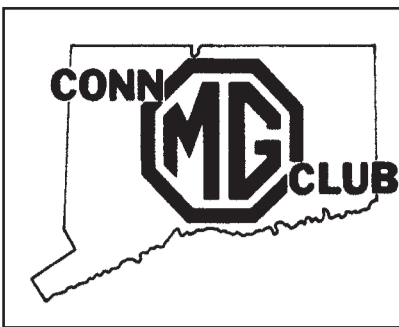
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Up the road to the Tower during the Hubbard Park tour.



# The Mowog News

The Newsletter of the Connecticut MG Club  
Durham, Connecticut

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## One very busy October!

by Bob Howard, Bill Brauch & Ed Cooke

### Regional gatherings

**Fairfield County** — This group gathers on the second Tuesday of every month at 6 p.m. at the the Bridgeport Flyer Diner in Milford. For details and directions contact Vic, (203) 378-5736 or [mgvic@sbcglobal.net](mailto:mgvic@sbcglobal.net).

**Hartford County** — For information call Duane, (860) 463-9968.

**Litchfield County** — Litchfield County will remain at the Pizza Palace in Torrington on the third Thursday of the month at 7 p.m. For more information contact John Bubela, (860) 455-6464.

**New London County** — In November the get-together location was changed to the Par Four Restaurant at the Shennecosset Golf Course, 93 Plant St., Groton. For more information contact Bob Yost, (860) 536-0847 or [rhyost@yahoo.com](mailto:rhyost@yahoo.com).

**Middlesex County** — Join the group for a convivial gathering of interesting people at The Ivory, 1 Kirkland St., Deep River, at noon on the third Sunday of the month. All are welcome — one does not need to drive an MG to the gathering, or own one, just to like them. Contact Bob Howard, (203) 453-2842.

**Quiet Corner Region (Tolland/Windham)** — Contact John Motycka, [jmot@prodigy.net](mailto:jmot@prodigy.net).

### CT MG calendar

**December 6** — Club Holiday Gathering, The Inn at Middletown, Middletown, Conn.

### Hubbard Park Foliage Tour

One beautiful, blue-sky Sunday morning, October 9th, 13 MGs (and one Miata) met at the commuter lot in Wallingford, Conn., and took a meandering ride through several towns, ending at Hubbard Park in Meriden. Jon Day led the group out and away, twisting and turning through sunny and shady areas, uphill and down. Pausing briefly at Hubbard Park, the group headed up the road to the Tower, pausing for a group photo at the reservoir dam before the final dash for the top.

Along the way, Laura, of Passing Bird Photos, took more pictures. Look for them on her site, [passingbird.com](http://passingbird.com).

From the Tower the view was spectacular, a clear vista to Hartford and the Berkshires, around to New Haven, Long Island, and, what was said by some, to the edge of the earth.

Onward, then, to lunch, after which the group disbanded and cars headed home. Everyone had a great day of driving in bright sun, moderate cold and light winds. Participants this day included Jon Day, Chuck and Jackie Sherwood, Chris and Jim Wiebe, Bill Brauch, Charis Arnov, Curt and Cathy Downing, Barbara Johnson, Rick Friswell, Marilyn and Bob Lavezzoli, Ramon and Pilar Gonzalez, Bob Howard, Maryanne and George Muscolino, Gretchen and Glenn Reynolds, Kathy and Gary Dabrowski,



On the Woodstock tour. Photos by Bill Brauch &amp; Passing Bird Photos

and Andre Delachrotiere.

### Woodstock Foliage Tour

On Saturday, October 18th, four MGs ventured on back roads from Bill Brauch's place to Woodstock, Conn., to see the big craft show at Roseland Cottage. We then went to Sweet Eveleena's for lunch, and more back roads back to Lebanon.

The leaf peeping was great, the roads were great and a good time was had by all.

(See More CT MG, page 22)

### More Petit (Continued from page 1)

and about 15kph (9mph) in top speed. Some lengthy pit stops complicated things and, she said, "We lost too much time and we could not catch up again. But we ran the best we possibly could and actually ranked well for a time in spite of the problem with the car, [which] otherwise drove very well."

Compounding the disappointment of not finishing in at least the top five as Kevin Buckler had hoped, TRG-AMR also lost its contender in one of the weekend's supporting races, the Continental Tire SportsCar Challenge. During qualifying, on the second lap, Max Riddle in the team's #07 Aston Vantage GT4 was caught without rear brakes down the circuit's back straightway, the fastest part of the track and just before a turn to the left. The car plowed off

the track, through the gravel pit and into a wall, bouncing back onto the course with debris including a lost wheel following it. The qualifying session was immediately red-flagged, and the team penalized for causing the red flag. However, the point was moot; the car was wrecked, its race over before it had even begun. Fortunately, Riddle was not hurt.

Luck was not with another team this paper has been following in the Tudor series, OAK Racing. It will be remembered that up until the Lone Star Le Mans at the Circuit of the Americas, the team, consisting of drivers Gustavo Yacaman, Alex Brundle, Olivier Pla and/or Ho-Pin Tung, campaigned a Morgan-Nissan P2-style prototype. After an accident at Road America, the car was retired and replaced by a closed car for the remaining two races, a Ligier JS P2 with Honda rather than Nissan power.

The #42 Ligier-Honda performed brilliantly in the hands of Yacaman, Brundle and Tung at its debut at COTA, achieving pole and finishing 2nd, and hopes were high for Petit. OAK Racing was also sitting in 5th place in the Tudor prototype team championship. Recognizing it was going to be a long slog, Yacaman commented before the race, "The key will be patience, patience, some patience and a little more patience."

Tung was blunter. "Our objective is clear: winning Petit Le Mans," he said.

It all started well enough, with the Ligier-Honda topping everyone in the third practice, but it went south from there. During the first minute of qualifying technical problems forced Brundle and the Ligier-Honda to stop at Turn 2. Brian Friselle in the #9 Corvette DP was caught out cresting the hill and tried to avoid Brundle, but the Corvette's brakes locked up and he made contact. The session was red-flagged and both cars were forced to start at the back of the grid as a penalty.

Brundle also started the race and soon worked his way through traffic, going from 11th to as high as 3rd in class (and 3rd overall) before an undisclosed problem forced a four-minute pit session with the rear deck lid off the car. Brundle drove for nearly two hours, dealing with the multiple cautions and traffic and attempting to gain positions when the field went green. He handed off to Tung with the car running 9th in class and 28th overall.

Tung had the car for the next two and a half hours, starting a lap down from the overall leader but taking advantage of still more cautions to improve his position. Within his first half hour he was up to 8th in class; on his next pit stop for fuel, he was running 7th, and upon handing the car over to Yacaman about four and a half hours into the race, he was in 6th, and 6th overall. Tung even set the fastest time of the race, 1:13.921.

Barely half an hour later and just shy of the race's midpoint Yacaman's stint ended abruptly. In an apparent attempt to pass

(See More Tudor, page 22)



James Davison (left) celebrates his fourth consecutive Tudor pole with TRG-AMR's owner, Kevin Buckler. Below: Christina Nielsen, who has already signed on for the 2015 season.

Photos by TRG-AMR (Brian Cleary) & Christina Nielsen Racing (Jan Kaiser)



### Nielsen with Aston & TRG-AMR for next year's Tudor USCC

On November 6th TRG-AMR North America announced that European GT racing star Christina Nielsen has joined the team for the entire 2015 Tudor United SportsCar Championship season. She will be co-driving with James Davison.

This paper has talked about "iron men" running in different race series the same weekend, and to that list of extraordinary individuals must be added "iron woman" Nielsen. During the Petit Le Mans weekend at Road Atlanta, Nielsen qualified and ran in Rounds 15 and 16 in the Porsche GT3 Cup Challenge USA series, as well as performed with distinction in the ten-hour Tudor race in TRG-AMR's Aston Martin Vantage V12.

In the single-make Challenge races, Nielsen qualified 6th in her NGT Motorsport Porsche 991 and finished her first race in 6th, then returned in the rain for the second race, grabbed two positions early on as cars spun out in the wet, and eventually drove her way to 3rd place and a podium finish. Alternating with the sessions in the Porsche were the practices for Tudor.

Nielsen's year took in Challenge races at Sebring, Laguna Seca, Lime Rock, Watkins Glen, Mosport, Road America and COTA, as well as Road Atlanta. She achieved eight top-five finishes including three podiums, her best result a 2nd in Round 5 at Lime Rock.

She also drove NGT Motorsport's Porsche 911 GT America in three Tudor races, at Daytona, Sebring and Watkins Glen. NGT had planned to run a Porsche in GT Daytona at Road Atlanta, but one of Nielsen's scheduled teammates, Earl Bamber, left for a spot on the factory team at Le Mans and NGT withdrew the car.

TRG-AMR selected Nielsen for next year's Tudor with an eye toward the championship-within-the-championship known as the North American Endurance Cup, where drivers are ranked at different time intervals in the "enduros" on the schedule such as Sebring and Petit. There is even the possibility of a return trip to Le Mans. Interestingly, Nielsen's father, Lars-Erik, drove for team owner Kevin Buckler at Le Mans years ago when TRG was campaigning Porsches.

The duo of Nielsen and Davison will begin winter season testing immediately, starting with a full three-day shakedown at Sebring International Raceway on November 21-23.

Nielsen commented after the announcement, "I really appreciate that we were able to put this top level program together. This allows us to immediately start focusing on working in one direction, learning the team, chemistry and the tracks, and of course the V12 Vantage GT3. I have no doubt that we can turn this into a real run for a championship next year."

Added Buckler, "We are so proud to welcome Christina to our team! From the first moment she tested with us to her final race at Petit Le Mans she impressed everyone on this team in so many ways. She and James are going to make one hell of a team." —BV

[From track reports and a TRG-AMR press release.]



# British Motorcars Update

Hope, Rhode Island

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## What a year for BMCNE!

by Chris Izzo



Always a favorite, the Kane Motorcar tech session.

Photos by Chris Izzo

2014 was an active year for British Motorcars of New England, and I would like to thank all our members who helped with the events. We plan to keep the momentum going. We will start with our winter tech sessions and flow right into our driving season.

### Tech time

BMCNE tech sessions offer an opportunity to meet and explore local businesses that cater to British car enthusiasts. The sessions consist of tours, product demonstrations and hands-on technical advice. Informative and entertaining, local experts discuss their experience in fixing, restoring and modifying classic British cars. Our members come away from these meetings with a deeper understanding of how our cars work and how to keep them looking and functioning at their best.

If you have a favorite automotive shop or think you know of an interesting local business, let us know and we might be able to add them to our tech session calendar!

In 2014 we visited seven local businesses and garages. We had educational visits with C.A.R.S. Paint Plus, Xtreme Restorations, Rhode Island Wiring, Kane Motorcar, Dean's International Auto Service, Dave Black's Mini Barn and Her Majesty's Auto Service.

The meetings were both fun and informative. What better way to spend a winter Saturday morning — British cars, friends, coffee and Allie's Donuts!

### Cruise Nights and driving tours

Our Friday night Cruise Nights at the Gazebo in North Scituate, R.I., are the backbone of our driving season gatherings. We will try to have a short cruise every other Friday, usually trying different local ice cream shops.

We had five driving tours around southern New England. Five BMCNE members stepped up with some fun-filled tours — wonderful roads, destinations and scenery. Bob Stahlbush took us on a Lighthouse Tour; it was educational and very scenic. Mike and Mallory Walsh led a tour of Rhode Island's East Bay with stops at the Audubon Wildlife Refuge, Tiverton Four Corners, the Little Compton Historical Society at Wilbor House, Sakonnet Point, Sakonnet Vineyard and then Gray's Ice Cream. Paul and Nancy LeBlanc took us on a Wine Tasting Tour at Connecticut's Taylor Brooke Winery, with a stop for breakfast before our winery visit and a trip to Fort Hill

### Beach scene from the East Bay Tour led by Mike and Mallory Walsh.



Farms for ice cream afterward.

Then came our annual Apple Picking Tour, planned and run by Patty and Dave LaChapelle and Paula and Marshall Richard. There was a stop for lunch before getting to Palazzi Orchard and a quick trip for ice cream before heading home.

The weather was perfect for each of our driving events, except for our last tour, the October Foliage Tour through Narragansett. Rain forced a cancellation of Kevin and Carol Welch's ride, which would have been a spectacular drive through the back roads of southern Rhode Island.

Thank you all for planning and leading these great rides!

### Still more events

Marge Guillet planned and organized a number of our parties and events, including Pizza Night and Potluck Night. These parties bring together our members and friends from far and wide. Thank you, Marge!

We rolled our first ever Movie Night into Pizza Night at the Gazebo — complete with a large screen, projector and sound system supplied by Movies Under the Stars, we had our own drive-in movie theater. It was such a good time that we had a second movie night a few weeks later. We will be considering future movie nights at our upcoming Annual Meeting!

Bob Nason planned and ran the British Car Gathering at Hank's Dairy Bar in Plainfield, Conn. There were raffle prizes and a DJ. This was the second year for this fun-filled event, so keep an eye out for it next year. It's fast becoming an annual event.

### Annual Meeting

Our 2015 Annual Meeting will take place on January 24th at the Scituate Meeting House, located across the street from the Gazebo. BMCNE will supply the pizza and soft drinks.

At this meeting we will hold elections for all the club officer positions: President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary, Membership Chair, Activities Chair, Sunshine Committee and Communications Chair. To read what these positions require, visit [www.bmcne.org/BMCNE\\_ByLaws.html](http://www.bmcne.org/BMCNE_ByLaws.html). This is a great opportunity to help lead the club and continue sharing our enthusiasm for British cars.

If a Chair position isn't for you, then you can still help out by sitting on a BMCNE committee that will help plan all our club events. These committees will work on tech sessions, driving events, food events and more.

### Do you have a dirty garage?

Would you like to show us your winter project or

### More CT MG (Continued from page 19)

#### Cardone and Daughter's last Open Shop Day

The last event of the year at Cardone & Daughter, Westbrook, Conn., was also on 18 October. It was well attended despite the changeable weather. Mary Drews brought her TD, Bob Lavezzoli an MGB, Ed Cooke his MGB GT, Bill Fillanowski his TD, Pat and Judy McPherson their MGA, and Bob Howard his TD. Jack Daniels was there without his TD. Fred Bauer was there, too, though still unable to use his clutch foot.

Also in the lot were two Morgan Plus 8s, a Plus 4, an XK 150, an XJ-S, a Citroën DS 21, a 15 Six, several Austin-Healey three litres, and more that were not written down. The line-up in the parking lot caused passing traffic on Route 1 to slow down and admire.

Dave showed off his wire-wheel balance adapters and cars in the shop. Coffee and donuts, then later hot dogs and hamburgers, were plentiful and good. Everyone was already looking forward to springtime and warm weather.

Thanks, Dave, for supporting the clubs.



BMCNE at the Women's 5K Road Rally & Wellness Fair to benefit the Providence Ronald McDonald House.

need a helping hand? We can schedule a "dirty garage" Saturday morning visit from the club. We bring the coffee and donuts and you provide the project and the space. It's a fun way to pass the cold, dark winter months and help encourage progress on your LBC project.

### Or just a lot of stuff?

At the last monthly meeting we were kicking around the idea of a club/areawide swap meet.

If you are like most car enthusiasts, you probably have a collection of parts, memorabilia, books and more that are gathering dust and taking up precious space. We are considering starting an annual swap meet. If there is enough interest, we can add this event to our schedule, just let us know.

This is just a small sampling of all the items we will be discussing at our January 24th Annual Meeting. Join us for the pizza and soft drinks, and bring your thoughts and ideas.

This is your opportunity to help plan the future of BMCNE!

2015 will be another great year filled with entertaining and informative events. Thank you all for participating — and have a happy and healthy Holiday Season!

### More Tudor (Continued from page 19)

a GT car going into Turn 1, Andy Meyrick and the #0 DeltaWing DWC13 went wide and clipped Yacaman, who went over the curb he had been hugging, into the grass and seconds later into the tire wall.

Yacaman, who escaped injury, said later, "I was indeed hit in the right rear corner by the DeltaWing, but I blame myself for putting my car in a position of vulnerability. It was a complete shame because we definitely had a car capable to fight for the win at the end of the race." The team would ultimately be ranked 9th in class and 42nd overall.

It was a sad end to the season for OAK Racing, but the team could take heart in the fact that Yacaman and Brundle would take the podium in their #35 Morgan-Judd LM P2 in the 6 Hours of Fuji the following weekend, part of the FIA World Endurance Championship. Also that weekend, in the Asian Le Mans Series, Ho-Pin Tung and David Cheng would take both the pole and outright victory in their #1 Morgan-Judd in the 3 Hours of Shanghai.

Returning to Petit, the overall top three finishers were prototypes. Being the fastest cars on the track, this was expected. The race was won by brothers Jordan and Ricky Taylor and Max Angelelli in their #10 Corvette DP, followed by Fittipaldi, Barbosa and Sebastien Bourdais in the #60 Corvette DP and Scott Dixon, Memo Rojas and Scott Pruett in the #01 Riley DP.

Taking the checker for their teams as leaders in the other classes were, in Prototype Challenge, Renger van der Zande in the #8 ORECA FLM 09 Chevrolet; in GT Le Mans, Wolf Henzler in the #17 Porsche 911 RSR; and, in GT Daytona, Christopher Haase in the #48 Audi R8 LMS.

OAK Racing did maintain its 5th place standing among the prototype teams in the Tudor United SportsCar Championship.

And it all starts again at Daytona in January. As Kevin Buckler would say, "Stay tuned."

[From track and team reports, with special thanks to IMSA's Lee Driggers and Fox Sports.]

### OAK Racing's closed-cockpit Ligier P2 car.

Photo courtesy OAK Racing

