

NORTH AMERICAN



FEBRUARY 2019 ISSUE 85





Two incredibly historic MGA race cars are presently on display in the International Motor Racing Research Center in Watkins Glen, which is considered by many racing enthusiasts as the closest thing to heaven.

There's the 1960 MGA Twin-Cam roadster that was part of "Jake's Stable" and the 1957 MGA 1500 factory-backed roadster that competed at the 1957 12-Hour Florida International Grand Prix of Endurance in Sebring, FL.

The Watkins Glen center, with roots dating back more than a decade, is dedicated to the history of motorsports and "and embodies the speed, drama and camaraderie of amateur and professional motor racing throughout the world," according to organizers.

The 1960 MGA was purchased new by Karl Stickley of Binghamton, NY and was turned over to racer Ted Rounds for the 1960 season. It became part of the infamous "Jake's Stable" racing team, according to the research center.

Racing out of Gordy Morris' garage in Maryland, NY, Robert "Jake" Bucher, Sherm Decker and Ted Rounds campaigned MGA Twin-Cams with great success at tracks throughout the Northeast, including Watkins Glen, Lime Rock and Marlboro.

The "Jake's Stable" logo, which used a prancing donkey, was an irreverent reference to the Ferrari prancing horse and conveyed an attitude of fierce competitiveness regardless of the odds.

The car was retired from

competition in 1962 and purchased by Gordy Ruston, a member of the Binghamton Auto Racing Club, for track days and pleasure driving. The car sat for decades in Ruston's garage until it was purchased by fellow club member Dan Fadden in 2006.

Fadden embarked on an extensive restoration and in 2017 the MGA was awarded the "Historical Significance" award at the Watkins Glen Vintage Festival, completing the circle that began 57 years earlier when it first raced at Watkins Glen.

The MGA 1500 was one of three factory-backed entries for the 1957 Sebring 12-hour race. Prepared by New York auto dealer J.S. Inskip, the car was entered as a part of a three-car team by Hambro Automotive, a major distributor of



British sports cars in the U.S.

Driven by David Ash, Gus Ehrman and John Van Driel, the MGA finished second in class and with the other two MGAs won the Manufacturers Team Prize for the highest-place finish by a team.

This car also played the automotive lead role in the 1957 Amoco film, "12 to Go," which documented the 1957 Sebring race. The MGA also raced successfully

during the 1959 SCCA season, driven by Ted Rounds, and took four first-place trophies in eight starts at tracks such as Lime Rock, Watkins Glen, Thompson and Giant's Despair.

About the research center

In June 1996, Watkins Glen International race track officials and community leaders began

considering the best way to commemorate the 50th anniversary of racing in Watkins Glen, in 1998. John Saunders, then president of Watkins Glen International and today president of the International Speedway Corp., proposed that an addition be built to the Watkins Glen Public Library.

The International Motor Racing Research Center opened in June 1999. An extensive collection of historic documents and artifacts



were transferred from the public library to the research center upon its opening.

“There are many great automotive and racing museums around the world,” three-time World Champion Sir Jackie Stewart said, “but what has been created at Watkins Glen, a center for archives and real research, is truly unique and a tremendous asset to the whole racing community.” ○

WORDS: INTERNATIONAL
MOTOR RACING
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