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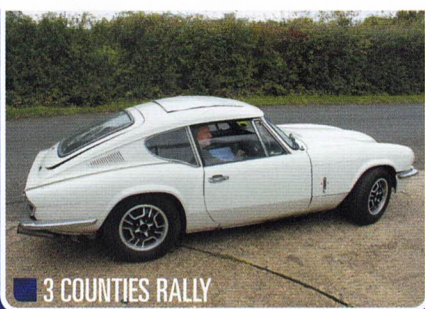
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## 10 COUNTRIES RUN

FULL REPORTS INSIDE

INSIDE:



3 COUNTIES RALLY



RBRR ANNOUNCEMENT



MOTORS OF MOMENT: ROADSTER

PLUS: 2020 ROUND BRITAIN RELIABILITY RUN UPDATE **3 2 9** DAYS TO GO!





# 10CR 2019 – The Highs and Lows

Malcolm Warren

**T**his year's Ten Countries Run was the fourth in a row for Madalene and I in our 1973 Mimosa Dolomite Sprint. With three previous 10CRs without any problems, along with many experiences of the Round Britain Reliability Run, we were confident about this 2019 event.

## PART ONE

The car had been thoroughly checked over, serviced and given a 'shakedown' on the Border Raiders (what an enjoyable event that is) all as advised by the 10CR organisers. A final check of the car was made before we left, including topping up the usual fluids etc., prior to meeting up with our friends, Club members from Bude, Colin and Maggie Stretton. This year they had entered in their Dolomite 1850 and together we set off to the start in high spirits.

For the four of us, our 10CR started on Monday morning with a 350 mile drive via Eurotunnel to an overnight stop in St Omer. This left us with an easy 200 mile drive on Tuesday to the hotel in Sedan ready for the start the following morning. Duly signed on, along with all the other participants, Sedan was left behind although a little later than the Road Book suggested after Ellis's words of wisdom.

We all knew this was going to be a day to 'press on regardless' as some 400 miles and seven countries were to be traversed before heads could hit the pillow for the night in Austria. All went well through France, Belgium and Luxembourg and indeed for most of Germany. Notwithstanding all of our pre-preparation, after some 250 miles we started to hear a knocking noise but could not be certain of the cause. There was no indication through the steering

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After some 250 miles we started to hear a knocking noise

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wheel, no issues with braking, it didn't seem to be exhaust related and it was not at the frequency expected from the propshaft.

Forty miles further on the knocking got louder (very much as though there was hammering on the underside of the floor pan) so we had to stop and investigate. On reflection, it sounds silly that we had continued for so long as the front left wheel bearing appeared to be the problem. Although the nut was tight enough, the wheel and hub were not secure on the axle, with a lot of movement





Pitting on bearing

of the road wheel to the point that it was approaching a dangerous state. At this point our spirits were beginning to wane.

We were fortunate that Colin, friend and companion on the event with his wife Maggie in their 1850, is an accomplished mechanic and, with sufficient spares and tools with us, the wheel was off and a bearing change commenced by the side of the road. Thanks to those members who stopped to see if they could be of assistance and particularly to the crew who loaned a couple of levers that could possibly help in removing the inner bearing.

In our anxiety to get back on the road as quickly as possible we did not take any pictures of our plight (Should any participants have any photos of our dilemma, a copy or two would be appreciated). The bearings came out without too much effort and they didn't seem to be in too bad a condition although a few of the rollers on the inner bearing were a little pitted (see photo). However, the old bearings were changed for a new set to give peace of mind. Being a little unsure about how well the bearings were seating in the hub the inner set was bedded in with a thin layer of JB Weld resin.

We thought we had picked a spot safely out of the way of passing traffic to change the bearings. The cars were parked off the more major road 100 yds or so before the village of Untermettingen and just fifteen miles away from crossing the border from Germany into Switzerland. We were on the grass verge of a small side road that appeared to serve only one or two dwellings. In the end it happened to be the busiest junction we'd seen during most of the day with agricultural vehicles, local traffic, some IOCR entrants, police and paramedic activity.

I was concerned that I'd not put out the warning triangle but I wasn't challenged. It happened that there had been a motorcycle accident in the village which had resulted in a very serious injury to either the rider or pillion passenger. Consequently, the more major road had been closed and we were on the diversion route. With further activity of the medical guys near our location, we were told to close the car windows as an air ambulance was due to land very close to us in the adjacent field. After packing the gear away the helicopter arrived behind us as we drove off; time to reflect that there is always someone worse off than yourself. We were back in the event and our spirits were on the rise.

All seemed well but we had lost a great deal of time and with only one 30 minute break allowed in the Road Book and a fairly high overall average speed, we were unlikely to make up time before the end of the day. We pressed on in the hope that our problem was behind us but over the next sixty miles the same symptoms recurred a couple of times. On each occasion the castellated nut on the stub axle needed to be tightened just a little more, clearly there was a bigger issue to be addressed. The propshaft UJs had been checked just in case, but they were fine and dismissed as having nothing to do with our problem. Our conclusion was that the hub was at fault and, with no replacement between us, our spirits started falling again.

On reaching Butschwil in Switzerland, 350 miles into the event, we pulled off the road at a bus stop to discuss the situation with Colin and Maggie. It was approaching 8.00 pm, dark and we were under the light of a lone street lamp. Without a miracle rescue (complete with

spares, tools, food and floodlights) our event was clearly over. We encouraged our travelling companions to carry on with the rest of the IOCR while we looked for somewhere to spend the night and review our Breakdown and Recovery documents. Time was not now on our side to experience the delights of the Alps and the mountain roads selected by Ellis and his team. The point had come to say goodbye to our friends. They were more than reluctant, even stubborn, but nothing could be done before the morning. With no prospect of an answer to our plight, or the presence of a 'knight in shining armour', it must be said - our spirits were very low.

## PART TWO

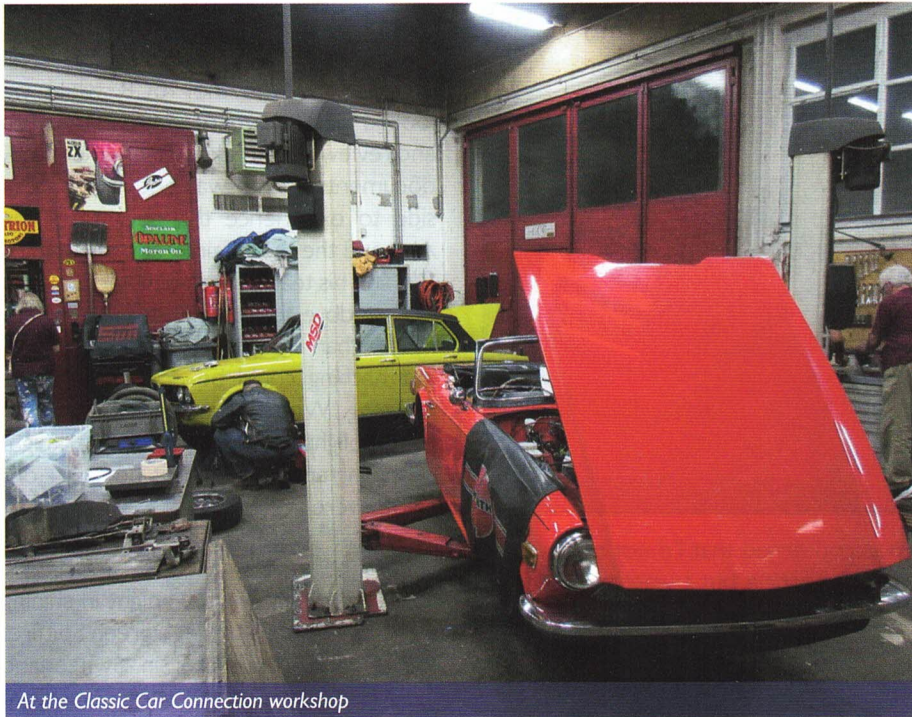
Who ever knew that a 'knight in shining armour' would be driving a green Spitfire? We were in Butschwil in Switzerland in our Dolly Sprint with our event seemingly over. Within minutes of our most likely demise, he appeared (names were not exchanged) headlights ablaze and on his way home after being with a group of Swiss Triumph enthusiasts just a few hundred yards down the road waving through the IOCR participants and enjoying an outdoor buffet to boot. Colin explained our predicament and in perfect English our 'knight' advised us there was a Swiss colleague up the road who had a garage a few kilometres along the route and could probably supply all the parts we needed!

## A 'knight in shining armour' driving a green Spitfire

Immediately our unknown rescuer was on his mobile phone and five minutes later Markus Tanner arrived in his rare white TR4 IRS. With the situation explained minutes later, the green Spitfire continued its way home and in the dark we followed Markus, in his 'white charger', approximately 5 miles to his premises in Lichtensteig. A couple of his mechanics (also at the roadside buffet) were already there to open the workshop doors, so we drove straight in. Being confident about the repairs our spirits, previously down, were now on the up.

Wheel off, hub off and an examination of all components confirmed the hub was badly damaged. A request to the stores





At the Classic Car Connection workshop

(Markus) and a hub was found along with a further set of bearings, nuts, bolts and all other items needed. While the hub was being cleaned and prepared for the bearings, Matthäus Scherrer (co-founder of the business with Markus) examined the stub axle. Whilst it would have got us through the rest of the event and maybe even lasted longer, it was decided to change it as the hub assembly was already apart. A stub axle, nut and split pin were all in the stores and within minutes on the car. With the mechanics in full swing it gave Madalene, Maggie, Colin and I the opportunity to have a guided tour by Markus. WOW!

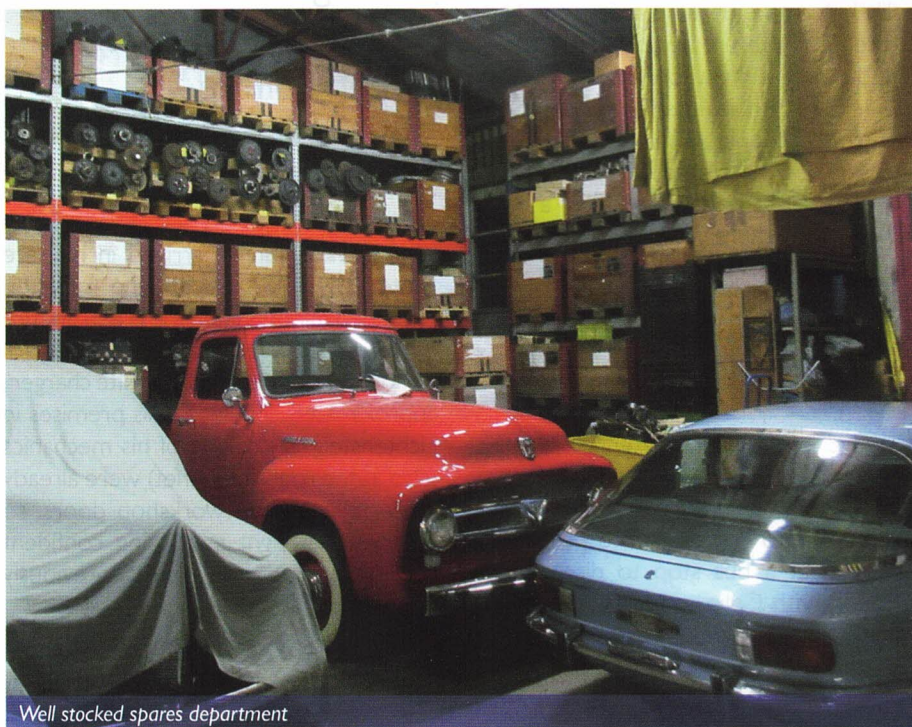
Classic Car Connection AG (CCC) specialises in British classic cars but, seemingly, with a predominance towards Triumphs. There was a huge amount of spares to be seen on pallets, in racking and on shelves. Engines, gearboxes, axles, body panels, electrics, bright trim and small parts by the score, indeed, virtually everything you could think of or possibly need, both new and secondhand. I apologise if this begins to sound like an 'advertising feature' but it's a gem in the world of classic cars and our favourite Triumph marque.

At Classic Car Connection, in addition to the workshop for servicing, repairs

and restoration, plus the spares side of the business, Markus has a collection of classic cars. As Madalene has said a few times, Colin and I were like "kiddies in a sweet shop". There were not just a few or a dozen or two but there must have been some eighty to a hundred classics in these premises alone. He also has cars at another nearby location and more in a barn up in the mountains. Within this article it would not be possible to describe the extent of the collection.

An early Rolls Royce took the girls' eyes but to give an idea of the range of vehicles, he also has the 1965/6 Ogle Triplex Scimitar GTS, with Triplex Glass glazed panels, that Markus claims was used by Prince Philip. Alongside these designs he has a yellow TR7 with delivery mileage (79 km only) and Dolomites in rally spec. under dust sheets, as are a number of other cars. The list would go on and on so suffice it to end here. As Colin and I continued our wandering around the collection, Madalene and Maggie were made comfortable and were offered coffee and biscuits whilst the Sprint was being sorted out by what felt like our personal 'pit crew'. Although time was passing by without us making progress to Bludenz and the end of Day One, our spirits were being comforted.

Arriving just before midnight for a welcome bed and a good night's sleep, we were not the only late arrivals



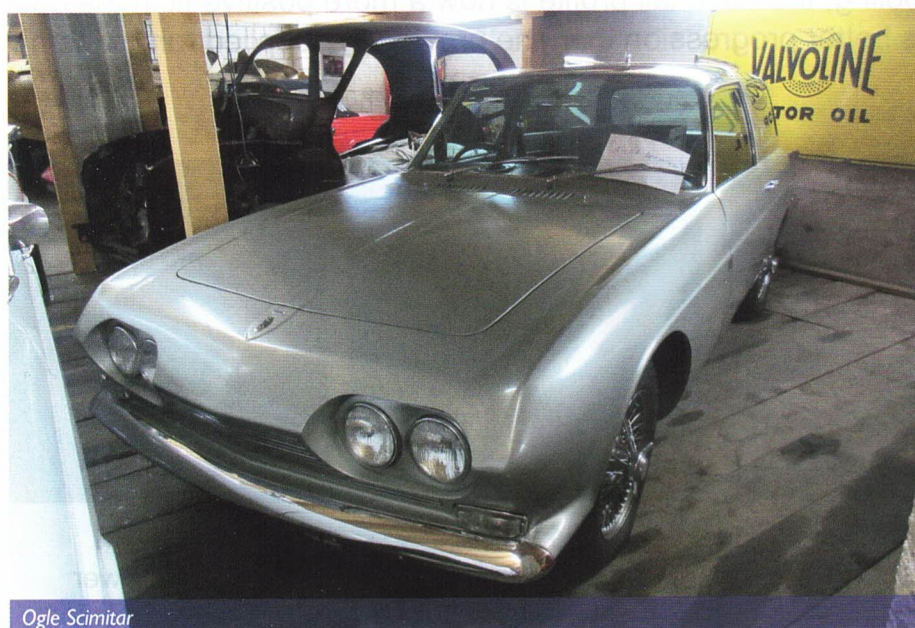
Well stocked spares department

With the Dolly now ready to 'sprint' away and the account settled, we said goodbye to our Swiss saviours. There was still some 60 miles still to go as we hit the road again a little after 10.00 pm. It was dark and wet and why at this time of night were there still agricultural vehicles on the road? Two or three large tractor units were encountered travelling together, each with huge fully laden trailers. We came across them on a long uphill section with straights just a little too short to overtake quickly and safely; very frustrating as we were now wanting to make good progress. Eventually we reached our hotel a few miles beyond Bludenz, just off the route to the re-start location for Day Two. Arriving just





Lots of interesting cars to view



Ogle Scimitar



Dolomite Rally car

before midnight for a welcome bed and a good night's sleep, we were not the only late arrivals. Our spirits have the chance to revive.

At this point I should go back to the time the Sprint was first at the side of the road in Germany. Entrants in a silver Spitfire offered help, which we accepted, to contact our hotel and convey to them that we would be very late. We had been unable to get through to them after several attempts as, apparently, the phone number we had via Booking.com was incorrect. From their hotel in Bludenz, we understand, they drove out to ours and explained the situation (sorry guys but again we didn't get names). While Colin and I continued 'ogling the Ogle' and other examples of rare machinery, Maggie received a text from our hotel containing a code number. On arrival at the hotel the code opened a small drawer in a box on the wall containing both the keys to the front door and our rooms - how good was that?

In conclusion, just how lucky were we to finally have to pull over in Butschwil? Probably nowhere else on the route would help, other than a recovery truck, be so conveniently to hand. Who would have thought that five miles away was possibly one of the most extensive stocks of British classic car spares in Europe together with a fully equipped workshop?

For those interested, may I suggest you look at Classic Car Connection AB's website: [www.classiccarconnection.ch](http://www.classiccarconnection.ch). Contacting Markus might source that elusive part - Swiss prices though. Needless to say the Sprint gave no further trouble and we completed the event and arrived home safely. We were also able to enjoy some of those mountain passes we thought we would have to miss.

Another successful IOCR then although, even without our issues, it was perhaps set at slightly too great a pace over the four days to allow us to enjoy the route and scenery as much as we would have liked.

Thanks to the organising team, our 'knight in a green Spitfire', the guys at Classic Car Connection AB, an obliging hotel, good friends, helpful participants and comradeship amongst members. At the end of the event we can reflect on our good fortune and conclude that our spirits are on a high once again.