



NEWSLETTER

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Cool Cars | Safe Racing | Great Friends

Watkins Glen 2024



Jenn Yates Photography



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2024 VRG Event Schedule

- | | |
|-----------------|--|
| March 29-31 | Wild Hare Run with VDCA – Virginia International Raceway, Alton, VA
Event Chairman: Mike Jackson, 561-622-7554, vdca@vintagedrive.com |
| May 14-16 | Driver Development Programs – Summit Point, WV
Novice Licensing School and Advanced Class. Chief Instructor, Denny Austin, DriverDevelopment@vrgonline.org |
| May 16-19 | Jefferson 500 – Summit Point, WV
Event Chairmen: Cal Trumbo & Jim Karamanis, 304-449-7050, j500@vrgonline.org |
| June 20-22 | Vintage Motorsports Festival with VSCCA – Thompson Speedway Motorsports Park, Thompson, CT – Event Chairman: Mark Gunsalus, 508-272-1323, mgunsalus@charter.net – Assistant EC: John Jeffery |
| July 25-28 | Pittsburgh Vintage Grand Prix at PittRace – Wampum, PA
VRG Event Rep: Ian Wisbon, 412-400-9375, ian@vrgonline.org |
| Aug 30-Sept 2 | Lime Rock Park Historic Festival 42 – Lime Rock Park, Lakeville, CT
VRG Event Chairman: Paul King, 508-847-4809, paulking@vrgonline.org |
| September 20-22 | VRG at The Glen – Watkins Glen, NY – Event Chairman: Mike Lawton, 978-274-5935, lawton@vrgonline.org – Assistant EC: Matthew Barbour |
| November 15-17 | Turkey Bowl – Summit Point, WV
Event Chairman: Jim Karamanis, 304-449-7050, jim@vrgonline.org . |

Visit the VRG website at www.vrgonline.org for changes and updates to the schedule.

SNAPSHOT! – 2024 VRG AT THE GLEN WEEKEND

by Bill Stoler



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VRG surveys consistently put Watkins Glen at the top of the list of tracks that most want to see on the schedule. This year's turnout of nearly 200 vintage entries was the largest I've ever witnessed and coupled with spectacular weather – the vibe was magic from the moment I arrived and lasted throughout the weekend! Over the years, I've heard it described as "racing between the blue hedges," and any shot with a splash of the blue Armco in the background leaves little doubt that the photo was taken at the historic venue in upstate New York. Of all the racing angles that I've ever captured, my favorite would have to be the shot of cars climbing the esses with the iconic billboards in the background. This year, I tried to shoot a little wider on shots – capturing the rolling hillside and a barn that shows up in the background – the same barn that you see in historical shots from the late '50s when the track opened. Shooting at Watkins

Glen never gets old and this year I was able share the experience with Jenn Yates, the daughter of Jim Wisbon and the sister of Ian. She's quite talented and you may have seen her shooting at Schenley Park. Taking the time to show Jenn around really reminded me of how fortunate we are to race at such a special place. (I hope she returns to capture the magic of this place next year!)

Hard to believe, but it's the 17th visit for the VRG and the move to September certainly worked out this year – it was spectacular! The large turnout and sharing the weekend with the BMW gang at a facility like Watkins Glen requires a great deal of planning and coordination and the ECs Mike Lawton and Matt Barbour, the tech guys and registrars Ralph & Lisa and Kenny and DC must be commended for bringing it all together.

This year the VRG helped to bring some attention to very a worthy cause this year. Several VRG members participated in “The Walk to End Alzheimer’s” that took place on the track Friday evening. You may have seen them wearing specially designed VRG T-shirts to promote the event. VRG member John Stoukides and the Rhode Island Mood & Memory

Research Institute helped sponsor the VRG “Finish Line Refreshments” with Amanda Barbour doing the “heavy lifting” by planning and buying the post walk refreshments.

Gosh, what a great weekend it was! There is no doubt – we love racing at the Glen! I can’t wait for next year! **VRG**

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Pick of the Paddock

1963 Bobsy SR2 Prototype

The car raced by Ralph Salomon in Group 1 is the car that really put the “Bobsy” make on the map. Jerry Mong of Medina Ohio built his first car, the VW powered home built “Mong Special” in 1958. The “Bobsy” moniker came about with his next creation – a pair of identical DKW powered H-Mods – that somebody called the “Bobsy Twins” and the name stuck! The success of the SR2 prototype and some financial help from his uncle allowed Mong to go into the race car business. Well known SCCA legend Chuck Dietrich raced this car in 1963, capturing the G-Modified National Championship. On some occasions the crew would switch out

the 1100cc engine with a 1500cc powerplant and Dietrich would win in the FM class as well. The success of the 1963 Championship allowed the SR2 to go into full production in 1964.

Mong would continue to design and build around 250 cars into the early ‘70s that included Formula Vee, Formula Ford and Formula Atlantic. The car uses a lightweight aluminum tube frame with a sleek fiberglass body and is powered by 1100cc Ford engine like it did when it captured the H-Mod Championship.

I interviewed Mong’s son a few years ago and he recalled his Dad always saying: “Without Chuck and that 1963 season, the Bobsy wouldn’t have happened.” **VRG**

– Bill Stoler

WATKINS GLEN SHORT COURSE (or Running the NASCAR Course with only 100HP)

by Eric Russell, MGA #61



I've been asked to give my opinion on running the short course at Watkins Glen. Well, I like it.

Oh, you wanted more words... OK, the day started with a "brief" Supplemental Driver Meeting. What I recall is, "play nice, stay on the track, don't forget to brake for T10." After an electrical glitch the day before caused me to watch the MG/HRG race from the bus stop I was hopeful our MGA was not going to let me down for the Sunday sessions. And, before y'all start cracking Lucas jokes, it was a Delco alternator that was the likely source of the trouble. <insert link to Joseph Lucas being knighted by the Queen of England for his invention of intermittent windshield wipers>

The first session was a practice/qualifying. I arrived at the false grid just as the 5 minute warning was given. I was actually glad as now I wouldn't need to shut off the engine and worry about it re-starting. The practice session went well (meaning I didn't

screw up and wonder why nobody was going down into the 'boot'). The MGA was running well. I found the advice to brake for T10 was spot on as I'd reach redline in 4th gear just as I got to the brake markers. When running the long course, I'd exit T9 in 3rd and shift up to 4th just before the turn.

Our next session was gridded for a race. I was somewhere in the middle of the pack – about where I am usually gridded. The start was clean – I only lost a couple of positions. After the first lap I found myself in my usual race mode (yelling into my helmet, "hey everybody – wait for me!")

So, as mentioned earlier, I liked running the short course. It was definitely faster. Would I want to do a whole weekend on the short course? No. I also like the long course. (I'd like it more if I could go a little faster in the toe of the boot but that's a concern for another day, probably after I win the lottery and can afford a real race motor.) **VRG**

FROM THE DESK OF DRIVER DEVELOPMENT

by Henry Frye

Have you seen the recent rule changes?

Our Driver Development program strives to prepare drivers for what comes ahead in the journey to becoming a safer, faster driver. To that end, everyone going through the Drivers School learns the rules, and how to apply those rules on track so everyone can enjoy our sport in as safe an environment as possible. Naturally, it is very important to stay on top of any changes to the rules.

Several weeks ago, VRG announced some changes to the rules we race by. The Board developed a strategy to seek feedback from several critical VRG stakeholder groups, then analyzed their feedback. Upon careful consideration the Board came to the conclusion these changes will not hamper the safe racing environment we have come to enjoy. For those of you who race with other vintage racing organizations, you have probably

seen that VRG has run under a more conservative ruleset. We feel these changes better align VRG with our sister Vintage Racing clubs.

One of the changes we will cover here is what drivers must do in the event of losing control of their car while on track.

4-Wheels Off or Spin during Practice & Qualifying session:

You must still immediately self-report to the black flag station. Assuming the car and driver are OK, you will be directed right back on the track to continue your session. If you don't come in, expect to be black flagged!

However, reporting to Black Flag is not required if your 4-off is a fully controlled maneuver to avoid an active incident or debris from that incident. If you feel your car is OK, and you don't need a time out



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to clear your head, make a safe reentry and continue your session. Be informed 4-offs resulting from not being given racing room are not part of this exception.

4-Wheels Off or Spin during a Race:

A race is defined by a session starting behind a pace car. If you spin or put 4-wheels off during a race you can continue the race session as long as you execute a safe reentry.

Regarding a safe reentry to the track, in the best case scenario you go off and will be able to see a corner station. The worker in the station will direct you when it is safe to reenter the track. In this situation, best practice would be to make contact with the worker with a wave or a point. Your car is still running because you remembered the mantra, IF YOU SPIN, BOTH FEET IN, right? The corner worker needs to know your car will go, so position your car to the best angle for reentry, or at least move the car a bit and give your corner worker a thumbs up indicating the car is running and you are ready to go when you get the signal. Be patient, you will get the point to reenter the track at the first safe opportunity. However, if you can't see a corner worker for guidance, be extremely careful pulling back on track! Position the car so you can see oncoming traffic to ensure the track is clear, then go.

It is also important to realize we have three events on our race schedule where we are not the primary race organizer, and the on-track activities are governed by other organizations. It is the driver's responsibility to read all the information presented by these organizations to know what is required by you, the driver. Attending the drivers meeting is also key to ensure you understand any nuances in the rules that may affect your race weekend.

While not necessarily a rule change that drivers need to respond to, it is worth noting we recently changed the black flag process to ensure drivers will better anticipate a black flag being displayed by throwing a double yellow at every corner station for several flag stations before the black comes out. The number of racers missing the black flag was an issue at certain tracks, as cars on track when they were not supposed to be took up considerable track time. Since that change was made, the number of cars that missed the black flag and taken the "lap of shame" has dropped to almost none!

Being good behind the wheel of a race car is an incredibly rewarding thing. Getting a handle on the art and science of putting down a good lap is the result of preparation, study and practice. We never stop learning how to become a better driver, and following the rules is at the foundation of the process. **VRG**



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FROM THE DC CORNER

by Kenny Williamson, Chairman, VRG Driver Committee

Imagine, if you will, you are racing your new-to-you race car but, unexpectedly, you spin out.

CRAP!

As you are pushing the starter button attempting to move the car off the race line, BOOM! Another racer center punches you and the next thing you know you are being put into the ambulance by the paramedics.

Can't happen to you? Can't happen to one of us? Well, it did (although this is a compression of a multi-faceted incident). What's the one thing that could have saved a trip to the hospital, multiple CAT scans and a major car repair project? Observing the flag stations and following the rules on yellow flags. Passing a yellow flag does NOT mean race to the next clear flagging station, even if you pass the incident you think the yellow is for. It does NOT mean put your car in the best possible position to pass the car in front of you as soon as you come to a clear flag station. That's not race craft, it's dangerous and can easily lead to this type of incident and injury. This time one of our VRG

friends got hurt, went to the hospital and their race car was destroyed because a few racers didn't slow down and get in a trail behind the car in front at a safe distance...

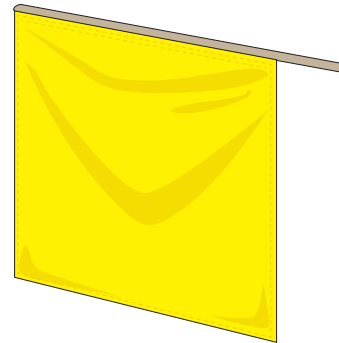
Let's review our Yellow flag procedures:

YELLOW FLAG (Solid Yellow)

"Waving on the paving; standing in the grass"

STANDING YELLOW – Take Care, Danger, Slow Down – NO PASSING FROM THE FLAG until past the next staffed flag station NOT DISPLAYING a yellow flag.

Note: Typically, the stationary or standing yellow flag lets the drivers know that there is no obstruction on the racing surface, however there is something in a hazardous area. This could be a car just off course, an emergency vehicle attending to a disabled



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vehicle, or a marshal that is exposed in a target area. A standing yellow flag may be displayed during the first lap of each race group's first session of the day to indicate the location of the flagging stations. In this case the no passing rule still applies.

WAVED – Great Danger, Slow Down, Be Prepared to Stop – NO PASSING FROM THE FLAG until past the next staffed flag station **NOT DISPLAYING** a yellow flag.

Note: The waving yellow flag tells the drivers that there is an obstruction on the racing surface. It prepares them to take necessary evasive action to avoid compounding the incident.

DOUBLE YELLOW, DISPLAYED AT ALL STATIONS – Indicates the entire course is under yellow (full course yellow). All stations will display double yellow flags for all pace and safety car laps. SLOW DOWN, NO PASSING. However, cars may carefully pass emergency vehicles and other cars that are disabled or off pace.

Note: The General Competition Rules do say a double yellow will be displayed at ALL stations, but if a station has an incident on the track then one of the two yellows shall be waved.

NOTE: A driver may encounter several flags before reaching the emergency area. The requirements are still the same: SLOW DOWN, NO PASSING.

A quick note on the subject of Waving Yellow. The vigorousness of the waving flag does NOT dictate the level of danger. If the flag is moving, it's waving. Period.

Another reminder about flag stations and the out lap. The out lap is not just for us to warm the tires and warm the brakes. We should be observing and taking a mental note as to what flag stations are manned for that session. Flaggers can move on a daily and even on a session basis depending on varying situations that we might not even know about. So from now on, warm the tires, warm the brakes and observe flag stations.

Yellow flag means slow down and no passing. The incident you avoid will probably involve one of your friends. **VRG**

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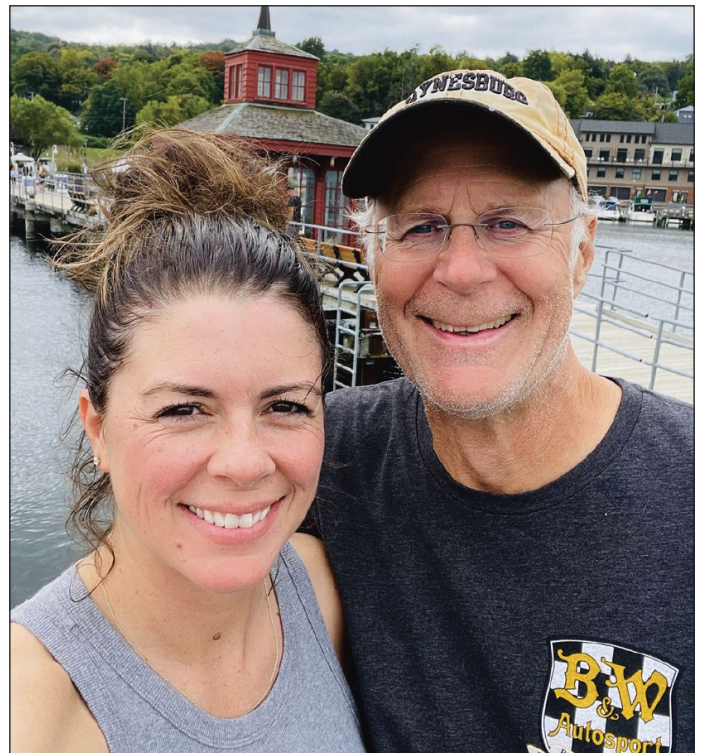
by Jenn Yates

Do you want to go to ‘The Glen’ with me? A question that my Dad had always tossed around every summer for as long as I can remember. It never seemed that it would become a reality with my life and busy schedule. This summer has been the ‘summer of adventure’ as my Dad, Jim Wisbon, described it. He and I took a trip earlier in the summer to the Poconos to meet up with his Waynesburg College friends that he hasn’t seen in over 40 years. While he played golf, I relaxed by the pool, had some drinks and didn’t have to make dinner! It was a dream come true for a busy Mom, real estate & family photographer from Wexford, PA. This next road trip with my Dad would be an adventure that I’ll never forget.

I prepared myself by packing all of my camera gear and many, MANY clothing layers, ranging from tank tops to snow boots, because it’s the Glen – it could be 80 and sunny or 30 and snowing. I was familiar with traveling to local day races at Pitt Race and Schenley Park but nothing like a long weekend in a different state, for 4 days, with my Dad. Lucky for me, I was blessed with the best weekend weather-wise for the VRG race at Watkins Glen International; it ended up being Sunny and 70! 9 hours total in the car with your Dad would have sounded painful in my teenage years, but now as an adult, I wouldn’t trade it for the world. We were able to talk, uninterrupted, about everything and anything. The sun was shining, the scenery was beautiful and we had David Bowie radio on Pandora, it was perfection.

Upon arrival to Watkins Glen, I quickly realized how special this little town was. Quaint little stores, restaurants and homes perfectly placed on the main street in town. We made our way to our humble abode for the weekend, The Seneca Lodge. Home of the famous bar with great memories strewn about of racing history’s past, \$2 bills and pennant flags from all over. My Dad had been dreaming of this big

reveal to me for some time now, since he has been coming to this bar and admiring all of the racing history throughout his adult life. Unfortunately I didn’t have the ‘wow’ reaction he was anticipating, but the most important part was that I was standing there at the Seneca Lodge with him. We then drove to WGI complex and checked in at the registration desk, signed waivers and received our 2024 VRG t-shirt with an extra special tribute to our dear friend, Tivvy. I handed over the signed waiver in exchange for an extra ripe media vest, #176 that had been well used the previous weekend at the NASCAR race. Having media credentials is not something that I typically wear, so to have them this weekend was extra special, even if they smelled like a gym bag! First night is always a busy night, Tech Inspection. My brother, Ian Wisbon, and his lifelong best friend and business partner Scott Buriak, along with the



rest of the VRG tech team were hard at work getting everyone checked in for the race weekend. I took this time to walk with my Dad, see all of the cars and start to capture some photography. Tech is hectic and I commend all of the VRG staff that make these race weekends possible for everyone! Thank you!

The 6am alarm was set for the next 3 days, which if you know me, I don't often see the sun rise, but the excitement of the adventures ahead was the adrenaline that kept me going along the way. Each day I arrived at the track and I met with fellow photographer, Bill Stoler. Bill is a photographer that I've wanted to shadow for some time now and this weekend I was able to see all of the great spots to shoot as well as understanding the morning vs afternoon locations based on the sun. This time spent with Bill was a great learning experience for track photography. A big thanks to Bill for taking the time with me throughout the weekend! As you can see on my recap page, I was able to capture so many great shots of the race, both on the track and in the paddock. I was also able to start working on videography which has been an area of camera work that I've been wanting to incorporate into my repertoire. If you were one of the lucky ones to be interviewed by Ian and I, stay tuned! I'm excited to work on this content and provide it to the VRG group

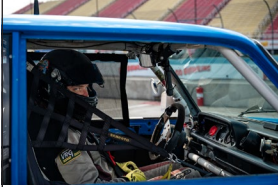
in the near future. If you're interested in an interview at future VRG events, please let Ian know!

While on my adventure in the Glen, I was also able to experience the Watkins Glen State Park. The waterfalls and rock formations at the State Park were unbelievably breathtaking. It was a nice change of pace from the busyness of the track. Sunday morning came and went, and it was time to pack up and head back home. We finished the weekend with lunch at Seneca Harbor Station overlooking Seneca Lake – if you have a sour stomach, they have a great old fashioned Ginger Ale with Bitters; Ask for Bri! This weekend was quite a whirlwind of adventure spent with my Dad and brother that I will forever cherish. It was nice to be able to enjoy something outside of my comfort zone as well as experience it first hand with my family. It was great to reminisce about all of his old racing stories of the days he would travel to the Glen with his friends back in the 70s watching his favorite drivers race on the track. It really came full circle to realize that he would finally have the opportunity to race on the same track and have his daughter photograph him from the famous blue armco.

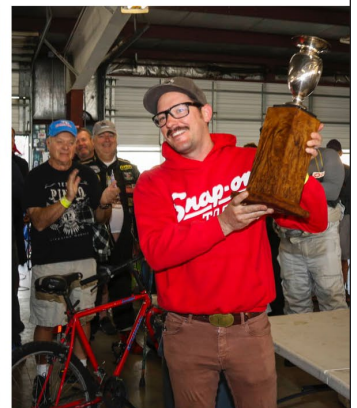
Looking forward to future races with the VRG and hope to be back to WGI in 2025! **VRG**



Jenn Yates Photography



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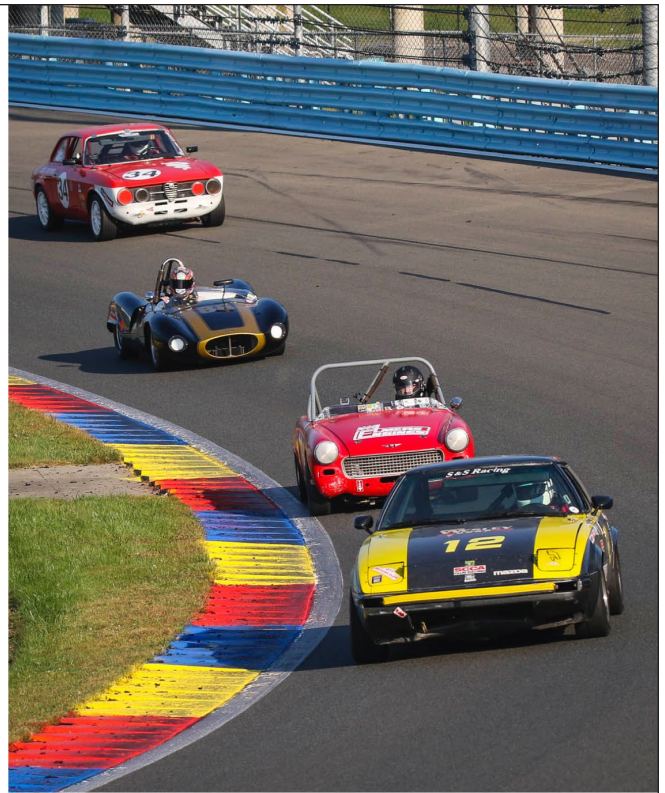
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We Need Race Reporters!

No formal education required! – just tell us how the weekend went, throw a few sentences together and send to Bill Stoler at wrstoler@comcast.net or Rob Brownlee-Tomasso at rob@rbtomasso.com.

*For the driver who enjoys racing
with others who value driver attitude,
skill and car preparation.*

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