

Communication from Derrick Worthington to Andy Antipas June 8, 2011

Hi Andy,

I recently found your website whilst browsing for something else. It was interesting to read because of my previous association with Titan.

I was employed by Roy Thomas to work at CLE in Dukes Head Yard on 28/12/1967. I worked as a race engine builder under Geoff Richardson. The engine build workshop and engine dyno was downstairs in the two storey building. The tube frame race cars were welded together and built upstairs, and an industrial lift was used to get them to ground level. The Duke's Head was a popular place for a drink after work.



I've attached a picture of the engine build crew which included (left to right):



Geoff Richardson — Foreman and senior engine builder — now runs Geoff Richardson Engineering in St Neots

Me — Junior engine builder

Tony Carlow — Cylinder head grinder

Trevor Buckley — Machine shop operator

Tom Close — Went on to run his own race engine building company.

Roger Hill was one of the team mechanics who left soon after I started and went to work for Tyrrell. He was Jackie Stewart's mechanic when he won the World Championship.

Part of my duties was to deliver the new Formula Ford cars destined for export to the USA to Tilbury docks. I spend many days driving round the North Circular Road (in the days when that was possible) with a van and trailer and a race car on the back. I also built and rebuild downdraft F3 engines and Formula Ford engines. but I longed to get out to the circuits. One regular visitor was Reine Wissel with his Titan F3 car. I went to a couple of races with him. He eventually bought a Tecno chassis and went on to become a Lotus F1 driver. I also raced against him some years later. He's now a "Facebook" friend.

I also went to a couple of races as mechanic for Tony Dron and his F. Ford

car. Tony is mentioned in your pages. Another Titan I helped prepare was the F3 car belonging to Dave Brodie. Dave owned a plating shop and everything on his car was plated. The inlet trumpet was gold (we took it off in transit on the trailer) and we chromed the suspension. What we did not realise in those days was that chroming the road springs causes a rate adjustment which is probably why Dave struggled to get the best from his car. He went on to have a very successful career with saloon cars.

I was desperate to get away to the race tracks and in March 1969 an American driver called Mike Campbell from Seattle who had won the SCCA 'C' championship in a Forgrini chassis came to Europe to race in F3;. He bought a Titan and I agreed to go with him and maintain the car. In those days a reasonable driver could survive on the start money paid by race organisers. I did not get paid but it was a hell of an experience. Mike and his new wife plus mechanic shared a very small motorhome for accommodation. I'm embarrassed to admit that it was the fourth or fifth race of the year before Candy (Mike's wife) had the courage to ask me if I would sleep in the garages at Monza to give her and Mike some privacy.



Once I got the message I slept in many European circuit garages or under the stars at places like Monaco. There is a picture of me with Mike on the starting grid of one of the European races attached in his Titan. Mike went on to become the manager of Portland Raceway but I lost touch many years ago.

The quickest driver on the European trail was Ronnie Peterson in his Tecno. Candy was a great cook and throughout the week we would camp in the paddocks and Candy would make a big stew or chilli that we would all share around a campfire. On Sunday Ronnie would win the race (he always did) and take us all (half the field) down to the local cafe as his treat.

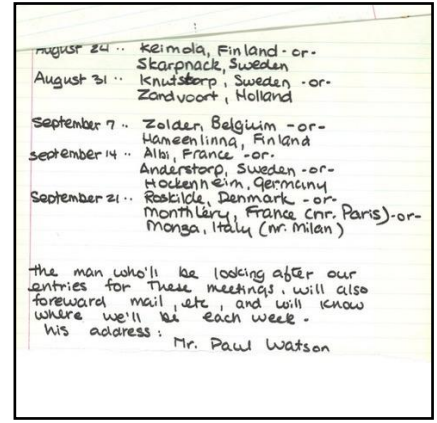
Barry Green was another of the 'nomads' on the European F3 trail. He had an old Chevron F3 car. He went on to do well with Indy cars!

Mike was a good writer (unlike me) and he made lots of notes during the year about our adventures. At the end of the 1969 season he sold an article which was published in Playboy magazine. I believe he made up much of his outlay but unfortunately I never got to read the article. I'll track it down one day.

I've attached a schedule from that season [*shown below*] which shows how busy we were. Contact was made via a motor racing agent who used to come out to some of the races with mail and entry details. In our case this was Paul Watson.

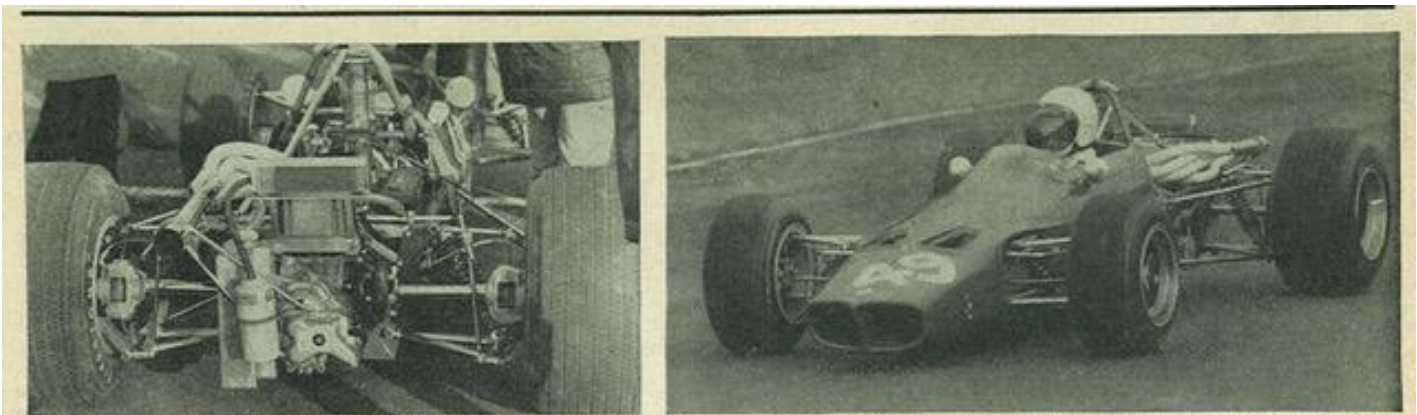


By the time we got back to the UK for the British GP I was keen to earn some money and I jumped ship from Mike and rejoined CLE who were preparing the move from Highgate to Huntingdon. The local residents in Highgate, London were complaining more about the noise of the race engines being tested late into the night. We had an effective industrial silencing system — but not effective enough. I was also promoted to occasionally preparing cars for the team

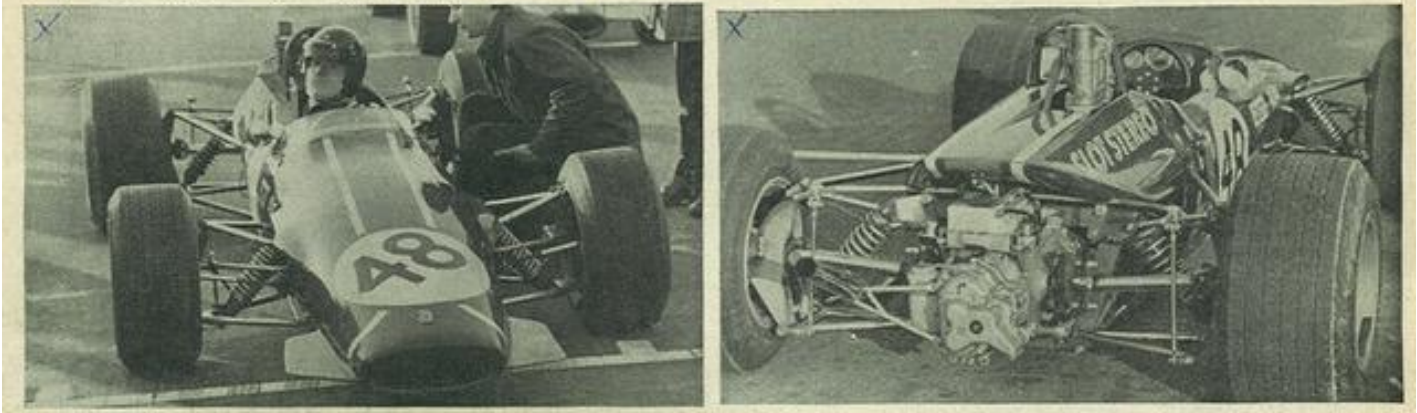


and attending races. I prepared cars for Tony Trimmer who features on your website. The problem working with Tony is that he was a better mechanic than me and got me out of trouble a couple of times with set up problems.

Below is a picture of me from a newspaper on the grid with the new MK3 Titan which I prepared for Roy Pike on several occasions. *[Editor note: This is the F3 car now owned by Andy Antipas.]*



New cars at Brands last Friday included the new F3 Lotus, the Type 59 (above). The car was driven by John Miles, but was really too new and unsorted to shine. It has a square-tube spaceframe clothed in a stubby non-veegee body with split air intake and ducted radiator; new magnesium rear uprights are used, with the familiar Standard-Triumph type at the front. The narrow spaced wishbones allow camber settings to be changed for wider wheels, and the rear brakes are mounted out in the airstream. Although the car's wheelbase is quite short, it does not closely resemble the Tecno as some expected. The entire oil system—tank, pump and catch tank—is mounted at the rear above the gearbox. At Brands the car used a Holbay engine with unusual matt black rocker cover, but apparently this was a production R68 and not a new R69 motor. Below is the latest Titan, driven by Roy Pike, which has revised suspension geometry, new uprights and alloy sheet strengthening the spaceframe.





There is also a picture of me and Roy in the paddock at Brands with an old school friend of mine.

We had a great result at Mallory Park that year where we had incorporated a feature which gave Roy an unfair advantage??

At this time Roy was tipped for a move to FI and we heard through the grapevine that Roy might get a call from Enzo Ferrari to drive his cars. Roy didn't normally spend much time at the workshop but since this was the number they had he thought it wise to stick around. He decided to fix the brakes on his beaten up MG sportscar and he stripped them out and cleaned them. He decided that he needed some new pads but the nearest dealer was twenty minutes away. He waited and waited but there was no phone call. Eventually he decided to take a chance and go for the pads, Within 10 mins of him leaving the phone rang and an Italian voice asked for Roy. I believe Di picked up the call — you could check with her. The Italian caller asked for Roy Pike — she said he was not there and the caller rang off. A couple of days later Ferrari announced Derek Bell as their new driver.

I helped "The Eng" move to Huntingon and I worked with them there until the start of the 1970 season when I got a job on the Brabham F2 team for the European season - this time with hotel accommodation. Whilst in Huntingon I shared a big farmhouse with two of the guys on the ENG photo from CLE and a young designer called Patrick Head. He was working with Lola cars at the time but went on to design some pretty good F1 cars.

My next contact with Titan was in August 1973. Geoff Richardson had left and started his own engine building business, and I had worked with him for a while but I always had ambitions to race cars, and had done quite a bit in self owned cars. Titan had moved to St Neots and I struck a deal with Roy Thomas. He was designing the Mk 7 Titan — the Super Vee car which appears on your website and I agreed to build the car and provide all the labor free of charge in exchange for becoming the works driver. I had already raced my own Royale Super Vee and knew the cars. Apart from a month's leave in November when went to South Africa to prepare a Chevron Sports car for one race (which we won) I worked hard at Titan in

St Neots for no wages anticipating a "break" as the works driver. In the middle of January 1974 Tom abandoned the project and I had to find work to pay the bills. The car was never finished and I never got the drive.

I went on to spend a lifetime in the industry. My greatest claims to fame are:

- Driving a Lola at Le Mans in 1975 and finishing,
- Scoring a World Drivers Championship point in 1976, and
- Being appointed as the youngest Formula One Team Manager ever when I worked for Don Nicholls Shadow team on the Interscope project with Danny Ongais in 1979.

I'm still working in the industry — currently as a buyer for Team Lotus and previously with Scuderia Toro Rosso in Italy. Ironically I purchased the travel racks for our F1 cars for the last couple of seasons from Titan in St Neots.

Apologies for the information overload — I don't usually do nostalgia but could not help myself when I saw your website.

Best Regards,
Derrick