

## PART 1



Magnificent sight of Paul and Jan Gerring's TRS on the Stelvio.

# The Trip of a Lifetime: Liège-Brescia-Liège

*Wayne Scott*

Tour organiser Malcolm McKay challenged Triumph TRs to competitively re-trace the steps of the 1958 Liège-Brescia-Liège Rally. It was to be an unforgettable experience for those that took part.

Idyllic alpine passes.



*The opening evening was superb and set the friendly, close knit tone of the rest of the trip.*

I fully understood that it would be a mixture of map navigation and precision regularity trials, held on some of the most stunning roads across Europe. What I later realised though, was that this event would be a true 'once in a lifetime' adventure. Tough, emotional, fun and hilarious in equal measures, the Liège-Brescia-Liège Rally will be an experience I will treasure for the rest of my life. So, let me share it with you.

The possibility of entering the Liège-Brescia-Liège had been on my mind for some time, but I had more or less written it off as being too long away from work – as usual. However, when one cold morning in January, Dave Burgess called me saying, "This event you've been promoting, Liège-Brescia-Liège... It sounds great! Are you up for it? Would you navigate for me?" I felt honoured to be asked and it was an offer not to be refused. Dave and I filled out the very simple application form, I robbed my piggy bank and our entry was in!

We made a list of minor jobs to do on Dave's 1972 US spec TR6 and an inventory of tools and spares to take. Luckily, Dave Burgess' TR6 is well proven, having been campaigned on numerous European tours. So, much of the preparatory work had already been done. The car also has the advantage of being left-hand drive and Dave had clearly gone to great lengths to specifically build this car with subtle upgrades to improve comfort and reliability for long distance touring. Squeezing in enough clothes, tools, spares and all the other comforts needed on a ten-day trip was quite a challenge for two blokes in a TR6 and the clever use of vacuum bags for our clothing enabled us to shoehorn it all in and squeeze the boot lid shut.

Thanks to multiple road closures and accidents on the way down, we arrived at the hotel in Liège, Belgium very, very late. We hurriedly dressed the car with stickers and rally plates and event organiser Malcolm McKay handed me a pile of maps at sign-on thick enough to stop a door and a ring binder bristling with bewildering looking photo controls and navigation notes – over one hundred of them! Furthermore, I learned that most of the other competitors had arrived the day before and had spent all day, whilst we were battling the motorways, plotting maps! I was already shattered from a long journey and the preceding week of late nights to clear my desk of work. We were on the backfoot already, and nothing on these sheets of paper was making any sense.

The opening evening was superb and set the friendly, close knit tone of the rest of the trip. Crews nervously introduced themselves to each other and wandered about the twenty-five cars in the hot and balmy hotel car park. Over dinner, we met one of the original competitors from the 1958 event, Remo di Cocco, and learned how the original Liège-Brescia-Liège event had been all but forgotten by the original organisers, the Royal →



Iain Paul and James Butler flagged away by Remo di Cocco.



Church.



Crossing the Rhine by ferry.



→ Crowds gather as the cars receive a civic welcome from the city of Ljubljana.

→ Motor Union of Liège until Malcolm McKay had revived it. They had run the original event for an entry of cute, sub-500cc micro-cars, including Berkleys and Fiats, partly as a response to the fuel shortages caused by the Suez oil crisis of the day.

In 2019, we were to undertake the route in ten days, rather than the three days non-stop of 1958. The aim of the rally was to navigate via a series of "photo controls" that had to be found. We had to take a picture of each control and then show these photos to the sign in marshals at the end of each day. Penalty points were accrued for arriving late at the end of the day for the sign in control and for missing any photo controls or not having an adequate photograph of them to prove you had been there. Sat navs were strictly banned and it was down to navigators to read the notes and select the best route to plot on the map. Then, just to add in to the mix, there were three regularity time trials held on race circuits. The 25 strong field were split into two classes, Authentic for those built pre-1958, and Spirit for those built after.

To make up for lost time, a long night ensued while I learned the format and marked the maps up into the small hours by the dimness of the hotel desk light. It was also at this point that I was introduced, by my driver and roommate, to the soundtrack that would



Lago d'Isèo.



Dave Burgess, left, with Mike Wing, right, and Caroline Metcalfe.



Remo Di Cocco shares his memories of 1958.



... Dolomites and TR6.



*In 2019, we were to undertake the route in ten days, rather than the three days non-stop of 1958.*

accompany every night's sleep – or lack of, for the next ten nights. Good job I brought earplugs then.

Just three short hours of sleep were enjoyed before we were up and heading to the start in the Espace Tivoli in front of Le Palau's de Princes-Eveques in Liège, where the original rally started way back in 1958. Remo di Cocco flagged us off. We picked our way around the tight roads of Liège while I got my eye in on the navigation and before long we found our first photo control. That was tough enough, but it was only one down, with 103 left to go!

The first day was something of a baptism of fire as it was by far the longest, involving over twelve gruelling hours of driving and navigating before a regularity test to finish.

As a navigator you can be your own worst enemy, losing confidence when every car in front of you turns right and you are certain it is left; usually you were right the first time. One control tripped us up when the major landmark, a petrol station, had been demolished and I found myself giving the road sign a close inspection, to satisfy myself that the name of the new shopping centre that had replaced it had been screwed on in recent times. Heavy rain showers forced us to peer through misted up windows to spot the next navigation mark, all the while battling the ever-growing tiredness. →



Neil and Sue Revington.



Epic thunderstorm welcomes us into Italy.

→ Throw in the odd road closure and it all gets really interesting. Another of these came deep in the forests of Bavaria heading towards Kaiserslautern. Having studied the map for a few seconds whilst parked at the, “you ‘aint getting through here sunshine” barrier, I hatched a plan to get us around the obstruction using minor roads. Mike Wing and Caroline Metcalfe in their TR3A behind us, who would become close rally chums of ours, agreed to follow this grand scheme. At first, the road was a picturesque single-track lane, climbing steadily out of the forest into the arable land above. The track then deteriorated until it was nothing more than a scattering of boulders leading out into a maize field. It looked impassable for any car, let alone low-slung TRs, but Dave kept the faith and pressed on, (much to my surprise) and even more surprising for Mike and Caroline behind! This was terrain familiar to me from production car trials of course, but not great for a road going TR as we bucked, bounced and banged our way through. Before long, we found ourselves on a rocky hilltop trail, wading through a corn field, hoping to pick up a metalled road, somewhere.... In the end we emerged, miles ahead of the rest of the cars and back on target. The short cut had worked and I had also learned the difference

between road signs, cycleways and footpaths. Or so I thought.

The first day through Germany was enjoyable and we crossed the River Rhine by car ferry to be first into the Kart circuit outside Karlsruhe for the first of the regularity time trials.

We were given a target bogey time for completing a lap of the kart circuit which was faster than we were expecting, resulting in lots of tyre squealing and sideways fun to keep on the clock around a tight circuit we had never seen before. As it turned out, being early out was an advantage as some of those who were behind us suffered with a torrential hail storm of biblical proportions. First it looked like it had been snowing, before quickly melting and flooding many of the tightest corners on the track.

Up and down the paddock though, I quickly realised that there were posh looking trip meters being fired up and calibrated all around us. I put on a brave face as I blu-tacked my Amazon bought egg timer to the dash and attempted to invent some home-made interval tables out of some scraps of paper. This might be trickier than I imagined. In the end though, we only dropped two points, a respectable result and enough to secure us third place.

From there, we headed to our first hotel

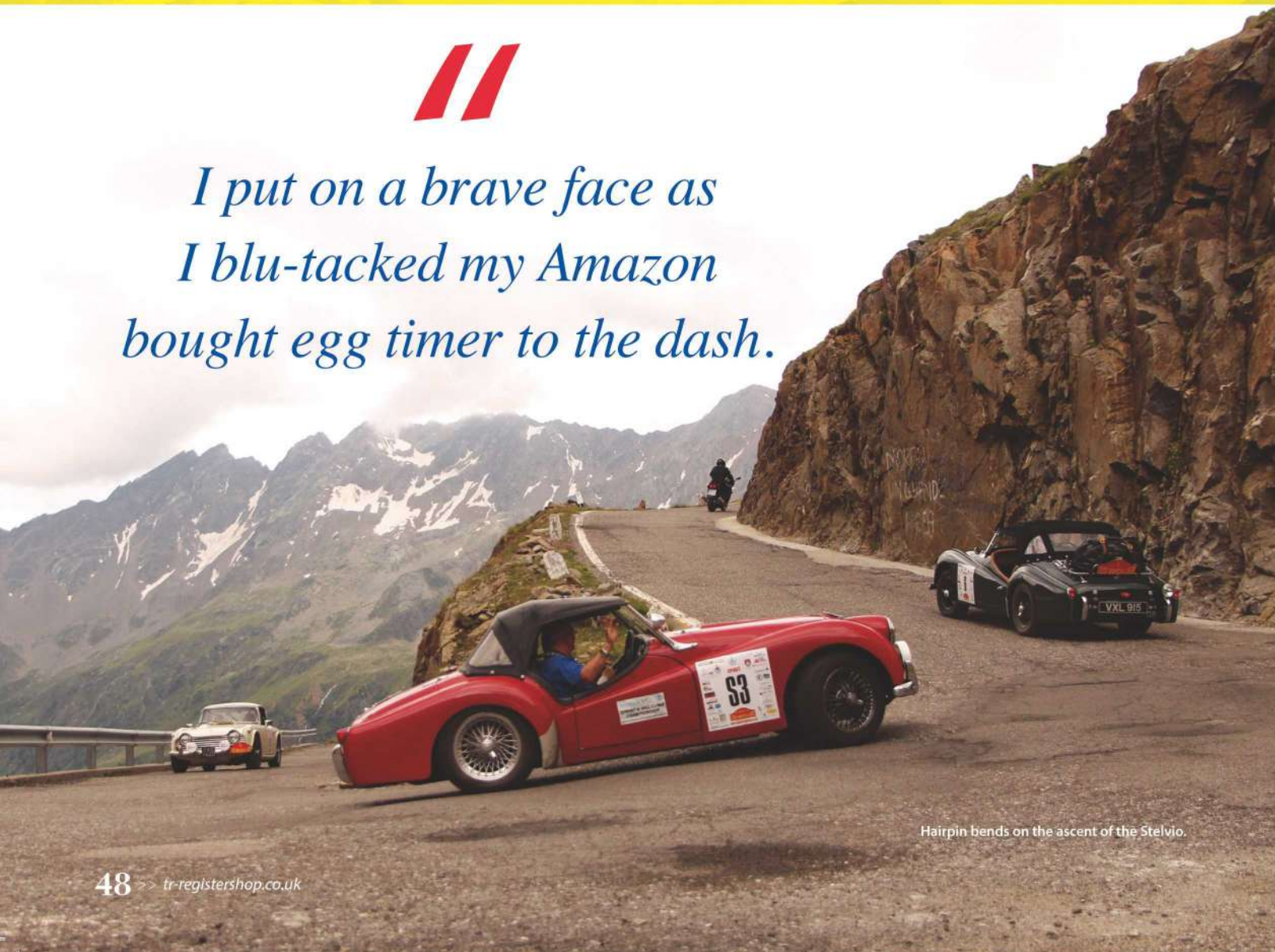
in Karlsruhe and whilst Dave removed the wheels to investigate a noisy front brake in the shelter of the hotel foyer, I got to work on plotting the maps for the next day.

Plotting one day at a time was an accidental tactic that paid off in the end. It allowed me to commit to memory many of the expected “tricky sections” and have the maps ready to hand. It was a method that I would stick with for the remainder of the event.

An early casualty of the rigours of the event was sadly the father and son team of Vincent and Arthur Paccellieri who were driving TS11, an early long-door TR2. Vincent is an aircraft engineer based in the Alsace, France and this was his first rally – some introduction! They suffered a hub breakage near Bitburg in Germany, a common issue in period. Iain Paul and James Butler, in car 7, the TR3A previously owned by Ken Richardson, witnessed this incident first hand: “We were enjoying a lovely brisk drive and some fun on deserted German roads, when we approached our first hairpin bend of the rally. James and I watched open mouthed from probably three car lengths behind as the front offside wheel of TS11 folded up into the wheel arch and seconds later two brake shoes, springs and the contents of the brake pistons, along with a trail of brake fluid, came towards us on the apex of the bend.”



*I put on a brave face as  
I blu-tacked my Amazon  
bought egg timer to the dash.*



Hairpin bends on the ascent of the Stelvio.



TRS of Paul and Jan Gerring behind car S12 at the first photo control in Austria.

forced to awkwardly reverse back down a long, wooded track. More road closures would follow and every single passage control was like a minor war being won that day.

Things improved though on the lengthy motorway section between Germany and Austria, where a special moment for us took place. Making up time, we arrived on the tail of the TRS of Paul and Jan Gerring and flew down the Autobahn at speeds you can only do on an unrestricted motorway, overtaking great queues of bemused looking lorry drivers as we went. The sight of us chasing down a Le Mans TRS on this long, straight, fast section of motorway instantly transported me to the fantasy of chasing it down the Mulsanne straight in 1961 and to be following such an iconic tribute to Triumph's motor racing history at speed was a moment to cherish. It would also mark the start of some gentle competition between us both, with just two points separating our cars. From that moment on, we were never far apart, either on the road – or at the bar each evening and we were to enjoy and share some of the most special memories of the trip together.

The Brenner Pass, with its numerous photo controls followed and I gazed upwards at the impressive structure that towered above us. Brenner Pass has a large bridge that now carries modern traffic hurriedly across Austria into Italy, bypassing the views and enjoyment of the old winding road below, which was built in more sedate times.

From Brenner, we headed across into Italy and towards Cortina where the impressive Dolomite Mountains greeted us with their glowing white rock faces, high glaciers and eerie looking dry river beds that, each spring time, carry vast amounts of glacial meltwater down the valleys towards the vineyards below.

We stopped overnight at the Grand Hotel Misurina. A simply stunning location on the banks of a vivid aquamarine coloured lake against the back drop of snow-capped Dolomite Mountains. We were afforded a hero's welcome here by TR Register Italy, who greeted us with smiles and applause, offered gifts of TR Register Italy merchandise →



Cracked hub from TS11.

They would re-join the rally thanks to the dedication of friends driving an over 800km round trip for nine hours to bring them parts. They made it to the end after experiencing yet more problems, including dynamo failure and a gear stick snapping. They, by far, had the biggest emotional rollercoaster of all the plucky crews.

Day Two saw us heading off for another marathon day through deepest Bavaria, stopping at a passage control at the AutoundSpielzeugMuseum in Tübingen before passing through Lichenstein and entering Austria at Scharnitz, then weaving our way through Innsbruck where the milestone of our twentieth photo control was

reached, albeit from the wrong direction, due to yet another road closure!

I had gotten off to a shaky start that morning and the rigours of the last few days, not to mention that last beer I shouldn't of had last night, were taking their toll. One particularly tricky section saw us head up and down the same road a number of times looking for a confusing series of switch back bends. The two side screen TRs of Mike Wing/Caroline Metcalfe and the Liège Rome Liège veteran TR2 of Jeff and Leslie Roberts followed behind us patiently. This time, following the cycle track did not pay off as it led us up a narrow gravel road to a locked gate, deep in a forest. Cyclists looked on in amusement as three TRs were



⋮ Brenner Pass.



⋮ Amazing dry river beds.

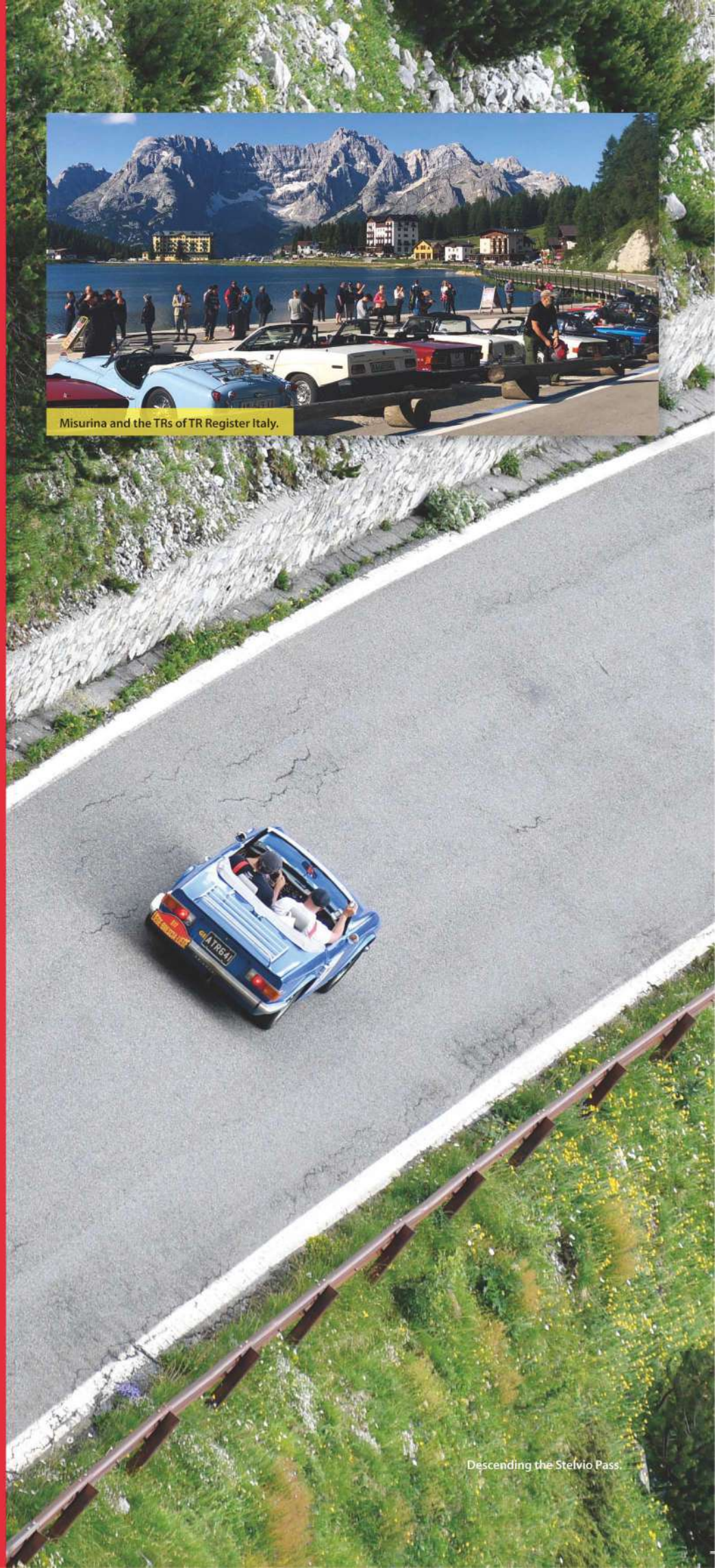
→ and gave us the privilege of their wonderful company for the evening. Thanks to Frederico and Giovanna, Giovanni and Virginia, Mario and Marisa, Roberto and Virma, Enrico and Elena with Alberto and Gianluigi for the wonderful welcome.

I think it was fair to say that none of us really wanted to leave this breath taking and tranquil spot. It was enough to turn even the most stoic of people into a poet, but the Liège-Brescia-Liège waits for no-one and so off into the winding roads and forests of the Dolomites we went. Next stop, Ljubljana – capital of Slovenia.

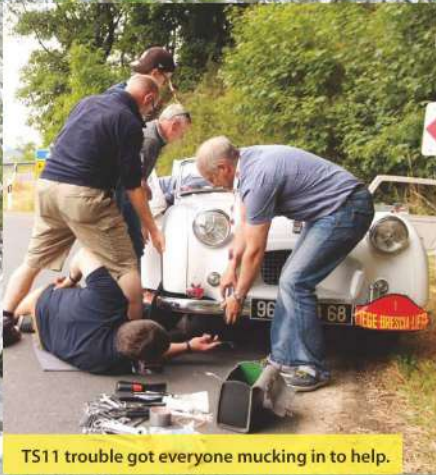
In 1958, there would have been a significant border crossing into what would then have been Yugoslavia. However, although evidence of those long since abandoned borders still exists high up in the mountain ranges, the crossing into Slovenia these days goes un-noticed but for a very small welcome sign. What you cannot fail to notice however is the incredibly dramatic scenery that you get glimpses of between the trees as you thread and weave the TRs between the seemingly endless numbers of hairpin bends, many of them still coated in ancient, shiny cobblestones, such as the Passo della Moistrocca above the border town of Vrsic.

It is funny how hours of being cooped up in the confines of a TR together does weird things to one's sense of humour. On the one hand, you never seem short of rubbish to chat about, (or maybe that was just us) but on the other, the slightest of things suddenly become hilarious, or at least they did for us. One suburb of Ljubljana for example, called Kranj, had us in hysterics for miles as we challenged each other to form the most creative sentences using the place name 'Kranj' as either a noun, verb or adjective. These long, in-depth, intellectual conversations on-board car 512 had not gone unnoticed by our fellow competitors and Paul and Jan Gerring in the TRS, who remarked that the peaks of our caps flicking left and right with humorous exchanges looked, from behind, like the beaks of sparring ducks!

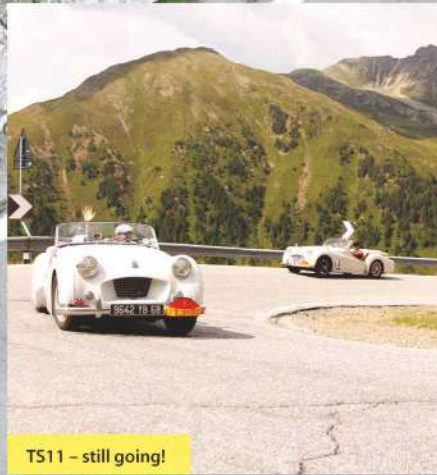
The arrival into Ljubljana was another one of the 'once in a lifetime' moments from the trip. Thanks to the local FIVA representative Janko Uratnik who arrived to greet us in his lovely Slovenian plated TR5, we were given a civic welcome and allowed to display the cars in the city centre, just off the main plaza. For us, it was an opportunity to share with people the historic significance of what we were doing and the important part their special city had to play in that story. All of us spent a happy few hours opening our car doors and inviting children, adults and glamorous ladies alike to come and sit in the driving seat and have their picture taken – and for us to try out the TR6's sound system! There was true carnival type atmosphere and the enthusiasm shown by city's residents towards the cars was overwhelming as they lined the streets and gathered round, camera phones aloft



Descending the Stelvio Pass.



TS11 trouble got everyone mucking in to help.



TS11 – still going!

to capture the moment. James Butler who was navigating car 7 later remarked, "The hospitality of Slovenia was great and I will always remember Wayne enticing 'Sabrina' into Dave's TR6." Just being welcoming to the locals James, that's all.

All crews enjoyed a day off in this charming city and for some it offered a chance to explore the Slovenian capital, whilst for others it was a chance to beaver away under their cars in the sauna of the underground car park at the hotel, as Iain Paul explains: "Spending my morning off in Ljubljana in the underground car park with Paul Gerrig removing the rear spring spacers on the TR5 to increase the car's very limited wheel arch clearance, well that was what it was all about - especially as we were a Team entry!"

The package that Malcolm had put together for our crews was all inclusive: breakfast in the morning, followed by a packed lunch that was distributed at the control sign-in each day and invariably devoured on the road, followed by a consistently superb evening meal. These evenings became the glue that formed deep bonds between crews and teams alike, where battle stories from the day before could be compared and lifelong friendships formed or reinforced.

Malcolm McKay's daily driver's briefing at these evening meals became the narrative to the event and in Ljubljana he also shared with us a charming black and white cine film of the original rally from 1958. In it, a smiley Pat Moss and Ann Wisdom were captured competing in a motorcycle engined Berkley and all the male drivers were noticeably smart, wearing suit and tie throughout the whole 3,000-mile long enduro. Not forgetting of course, that in 1958, there were no stops, save for a few hours in Liège. Sadly, the Moss / Wisdom Berkley died and retired with heat exhaustion; I was beginning to relate to that little car myself!

Next day, reinvigorated by the rest, we exited Slovenia's charming capital, vowing to return one day and headed back into Italy. A fun gravel section through dense, but mixed forest, took us across the border via the sleepy rural region of Nova Gorica. We had a slightly dark moment here, when we happened upon a domestic cat, mortally injured and writhing in agony in the road, a sight that would haunt the both of us for a couple of days and we both sincerely hoped that it had not been a TR that had caused its rather gory end.

We momentarily dropped into busy urban Italy, with large towns nestled awkwardly between the huge dry river beds formed by torrents of glacial meltwater. These river beds this far down the valleys are an astonishing sight, with the debris and boulders strewn along them giving a clue to the intensity and volume of water. In summer, they take on the appearance of the after effects of some natural disaster. Soon though, we were back in the mountains where we would be staying the night at the Hotel Adler after giving the →



The now famous town of Kranj.



→ TR6 brakes a work out on the Passo di San Osvaldo (827m), Passo Staulanza (1763m) and Passo di Pordoi (2239m). We finished well ahead of time and celebrated with a few mountain beers.

Things were not quite so rosy over in the TR3A of Iain Paul and James Butler however: "We had the worst day of navigation in history, if it could go wrong it went wrong, we arrived at the evening hotel exhausted and had an "FFEV" (full and frank exchange of views). It is a new term to Rallying apparently. Strange, as I have used it in business for 30 years! Thankfully it was nothing a beer couldn't fix! Although James admits the navigation failure was definitely due to the previous night's whiskies."

Next morning, the busy towns of Bolzano and Merano gave all the crews yet another work out on the navigation front down to more closed roads. Eventually though, we were heading out of Trafoi and ascending the steep slopes of the Alps on the Stelvio Pass or, as the Austrians call it, Stilsfer Joch.

The summit, which is reached via 75 individually numbered hairpin bends, is not only the highest point on the rally at 2,757 metres, but also the highest metalled road in the Alps. It is over two centuries old and links Austria to Italy via a close flirtation with the Swiss Border to the west.

Thanks to numerous motoring magazines and TV shows citing this as the greatest road in the world, it is now like the M25 on a Friday afternoon. We got stuck behind one of the sheds on wheels, progress was slowed to almost walking pace as every hairpin bend required a three-point turn by the campervan. In the end, it was all too much for the twin SU carburettors on our TR6 and the altitude had made the mixture so rich in the engine that we stalled. There was only one thing for it, let the car recover for a few moments before starting up again, planting the throttle and overtaking the lot to set our sights firmly on the summit.

Nothing quite prepares you for the sight at the top of the Stelvio, which incidentally was our 48th passage control point. From the wilds of the marmot inhabited Alpine slopes, you suddenly arrive at what can only be described as a bunch of hotels and a shopping precinct! Still, we took the opportunity to reflect on the route up, take pictures of the wiggly ribbon of road in the valley far below and afforded ourselves the luxury of a coffee. The well-earned refreshment fortified us for the descent and as we strapped ourselves back into the TR6, we noticed the camper-lorry finally arriving at the summit, time to get a move on then.

The descent from Stelvio is as exciting as the ascent, well at least when Dave Burgess opens up the taps on the Triumph six-pot engine. An impromptu photo shoot ensued before I buckled back in, prayed to any god that would listen and hoped to live long enough to see the ski resort of Bormio at the bottom. I am not sure whether it was down to the prayers being heard by the almighty or



... Dave's new friend.



Passo di Gavia.



Andy English and John Smallwood entering Slovenia.

the incredible stopping power of the alloy Hi-Spec brake upgrade on the TR6, but despite the break neck pace required to get back on target time, we arrived safely at the foot of Gavia, ready for the next assault.

The rally TR4 crew of David Hankin and Karl Boulton became affectionately known to us as "the roof-rack boys" due to their rather crude method of using a boot-rack strapped to the hardtop on their TR4. At one point in Germany, whilst threading through fields of tall corn and maize that were coincidentally the exact same height as a TR4 roof, we had seen a bag on a roof rack magically hovering across the fields in the distance; from that point on, the name stuck.

Dave had given me a rather nervy preview



The roof rack boys on the Stelvio.



of what was to follow Bormio at the foot of the Stelvio: "Even the goats blanch at going up Gavia" he mused. I had a feeling we were going to get a taste of what it would have been like in the fifties haring over rough tracks on dangerous Alpine Passes.

Passo Di Gavia did not disappoint, with an equal mix of wonderment at the scenery and jeopardy as at one moment, Dave mistook a hairpin bend for a straight over and we arrived at the feet of some rather bemused cyclists in a cloud of tyre smoke, accompanied by a lot of nervous laughter from within the cockpit!

Gavia is one of the few truly wild passes left in the Alps, suicidal drops either side of the road have tremendous, if slightly scary views of snow and glaciers, unspoilt and open with a lack of crash barriers or anything to stop you plunging to your end, Italian Job style. Gavia requires respect and concentration in equal amounts with just a touch of bravery on top and as Matt Monroe blared from the TR6's stereo, I reminded Dave to check the tunnels for any men in suits or badly parked earth movers.

The final section of Day 5 was in complete contrast to what had come before. The descent saw us drive headlong into a thunder storm of monumental scale and as we took shelter under the canopy of a community petrol station, we looked on as the torrents

obscured by a parked lorry, but none of that fazed us anymore. We were in the zone, the navigation was flowing, we were giggling away like a pair of naughty schoolkids, the TR6 was singing and we were having the time of our lives. As we drove into Brescia towards our half way point though, it was just about to get even better.

**Part Two continues next time, in TR Action 317 including more memories from Iain Paul, James Butler and Kim Durden plus we learn about the father and son pairing that shipped a TR3A all the way from the USA to take part.**

### Want to join the action?

Following the great success of Liège-Brescia-Liège for TRs, we are delighted to announce a new TR Register-exclusive rally from LBL Rallies and the TR Register for those who missed out last time on the Liège Brescia Liège.

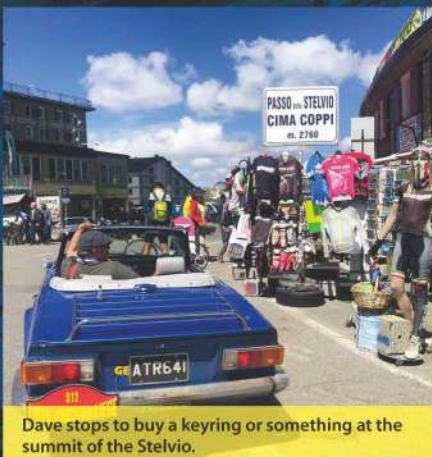
We are giving you two years to get your TR in shape, as this event will be held on October 8-18, 2021 – the date late in the year is deliberately chosen for two reasons, to avoid clashing with the annual international TR meet in September, and to ensure quiet roads throughout the route.

The weather should still be warm and dry, especially in northern Spain – as ever, our rally is much more than it appears, because it includes not only several days of superb driving through the Pyrenees, but also heads deep into northern Spain on stunning, empty roads taking in the wonderful wine region of La Rioja (where we will visit a superb Bodega and the first 20 cars to reserve a double or twin room will stay in the Bodega's own hotel), visiting several superb race circuits for special tests, and giving time off to enjoy such delights as Tarragona (once the capital of the western Roman Empire, with superb remains) and Morella, a delightful walled mediaeval town to which cars normally have no access. We meet local enthusiasts and we head north through the tiny country of Andorra, where we also stay and are welcomed in the excellent national motor museum. The rally ends with a Triumphal convoy into the astounding walled mediaeval city of Carcassonne – normally closed to vehicles.

We launched the event at the recent Triumph Weekend at Stratford Racecourse and entries are already flooding in. We therefore recommend getting your entry form in asap with a £250 deposit: this will hold you a place on the event and can be discounted from the first full payment when it becomes due – or refunded up to that point if something comes up and you are unable to make it after all. Please contact Malcolm McKay on 0044 7711 901811 or email: [classicrallypress@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:classicrallypress@yahoo.co.uk).



Descending from the Stelvio.



Dave stops to buy a keyring or something at the summit of the Stelvio.

of rain began washing the render off the building on the opposite side of the road, peeling it into chunks that collapsed to the floor like icing sugar. Moments later and we were back to the Italian climate you would expect, hot and sunny with temperatures into the high thirties centigrade.

The route now took us along a busy, touristy, lakeside road, along the heavily populated banks of Lago d'Isèo. This section threw up some tricky to find photo controls, mainly because I was distracted by watching the millionaire yachts out on the lake and fantasising about who might live in the island mansions seen across the water. One particular photo control was almost entirely

PART 2

# The Trip of a Lifetime: Liège-Brescia-Liège

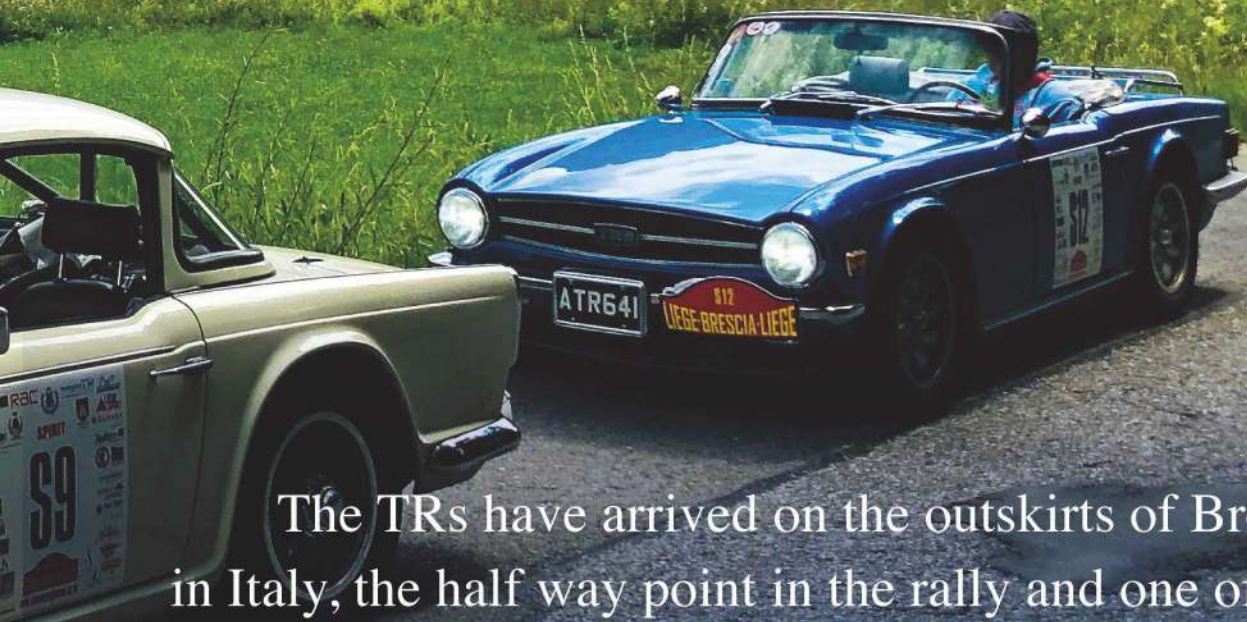
Wayne Scott



Last look back at the Alps as we enter Germany.



*We took the opportunity  
to crank up Matt Monroe  
loud and wave at  
the locals.*



The TRs have arrived on the outskirts of Brescia in Italy, the half way point in the rally and one of the most memorable highlights of the trip, as the entrants receive a warm welcome from the city. From here, the crews start their journey North again, back to Liège where it all began, ten days earlier.

We arrived early in the baking heat of rush-hour Brescia, so after a short pause, we headed into the city until we came across a rather stern looking police motorcyclist who was stood astride his bike, in the middle of the road, gesturing to instruct us to park up. For the one and only time in my life, this is exactly what I wanted to see!

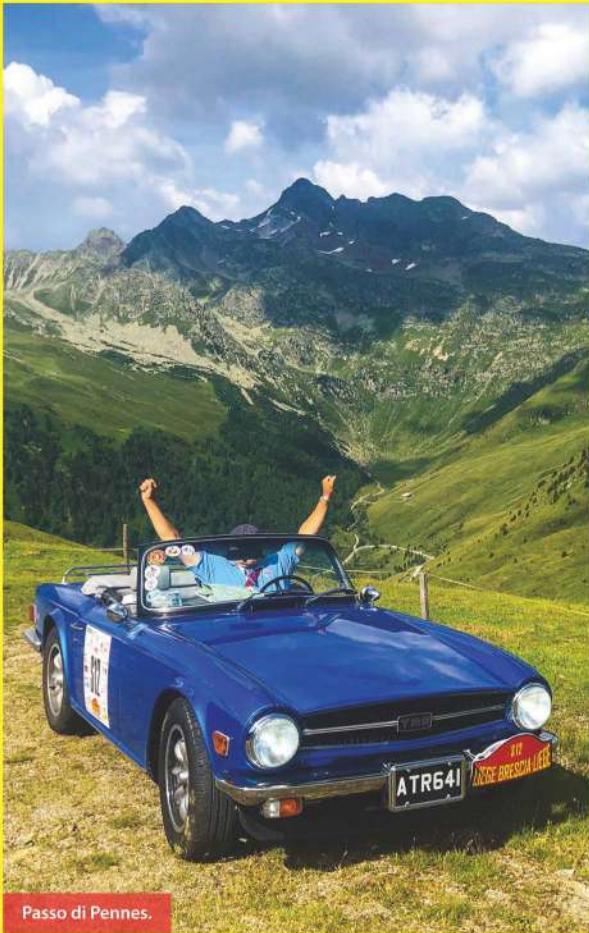
After checking in, watching the others arrive and having our controls verified and ticked off; the time came to set off again. We were first in, so were first out and we formed up in a long line of TRs behind a gang of rather intimidating looking police motorcycle outriders. Once organised, the police motorcycles rode ahead, clearing the road, stopping people from pulling out into the convoy, shouting at any pedestrian who tried to cross the road in our wake and in particular, stopping at traffic lights on red and waving us through. In TR6 S12, we took the opportunity to crank up Matt Monroe loud and wave at the locals. The parade ended with the cars forming up a display in the city centre's Piazza Mercato and, still grinning ear to ear from the experience, we headed for a nearby bar to sample the local wine.

It was a moment of history as well for, just a short walk from here in the Piazza Loggia, on Saturday 19th July 1958 at 10 am, Honore Wagner and Abbes Donven arrived in their Fiat 500 Abarth. They led the 13 surviving



... The finish at Stavelot.





Passo di Pennes.



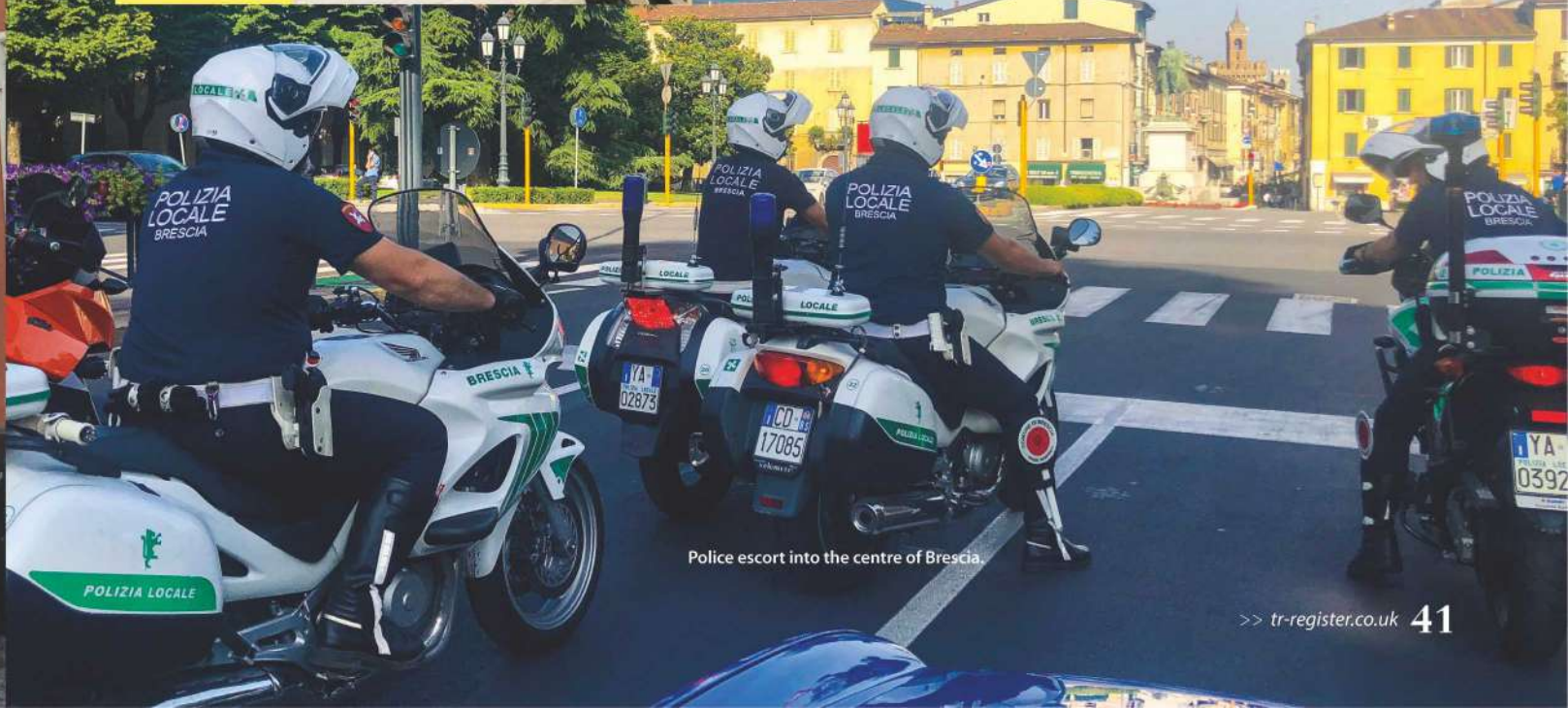
*We came across a rather stern looking police motorcyclist... gesturing to instruct us to park up. For the one and only time in my life, this is exactly what I wanted to see!*



History of Porsche.

competitors into this, the only stop on the rally. They had driven non-stop to here from Liège and the Piazza was parc fermé until 6pm, allowing crews to stretch, sleep, drink or whatever else they needed to fortify themselves for the return leg. In the end, the Wagner/Donven crew were beaten into second place by the factory entered Fiat 500 Sport driven

by Arturo Brunetto and navigated by the Argentine Andrea Frieder who would take the win after taking the lead during the gruelling overnight section back over the Gavia and Stelvio passes. For us though, it was a chance to soak up the atmosphere and then head to the stunning Villa Fenaroli Palace Hotel for dinner and a blissfully warm summer evening. →



Police escort into the centre of Brescia.

→ It was here that I got to learn a little more about the crew that had travelled a greatest distance to be with us. The father and son team of Jeff and Jeffery Givens were driving a 1959 TR3A. Originating from Leavenworth, Kansas, Jeff Senior was a former infantry colonel and his son was currently serving in the US forces in Germany. They approached the event in a suitably military way and earlier that day, when they lost their exhaust on one of the passes, they used their training to affect a repair on the double! What was amazing was that they had shipped the TR over from Kansas, USA to Zeebrugge and by some miracle, the car was intact and ready to rally when it arrived! It was an amazing effort and certainly, the journey would not have been the same without them.

The next morning, any hangovers had to be shaken off pretty quickly as not only did we have more controls to navigate to, but the day also included a regularity test on a nearby race circuit, the Circuito Di Franciacorta – which sounded to me like some kind of surgical operation!

The task was clear at the race circuit. We had to do three laps. The first was to set our target time and the second and third then had to be completed in exactly the same time as the first lap, with penalty points for every second we were faster or slower. Calculating this necessitated using two stopwatches and target times, scribbled on a map of the circuit, which I made note of on the way around the first lap to create a sort of log table against trackside milestones. On top of all this, I was

instructing Dave to either speed up or slow down, all whilst trying to remember how many laps we had done! It was at this point that I discovered the limitations of my egg timer blu-tacked to the dashboard.

Organiser Malcolm McKay gave us some sage advice, "Don't do too many, or too few laps, otherwise you will incur big penalties!" We would not do that, would we? Wrong. I was so busy shouting out times and counting down markers that I forgot to tell Dave to "come in next lap" and by the time I had realized this, we had passed the pit exit and had begun lap four. I expressed my frustration rather vocally at this point, and Dave had to buy me an ice cream to cheer me up – it is amazing how much it matters at that particular moment in time. Our margin for error for holding on to



Roof rack boys David and Karl ascending the pass.

third position for the remainder of the rally had just dissolved, so I sharpened my pencil and promised to try harder.

Along the banks of Lago D'Isèo, up the Passo di Gavia and no stopping at the summit of Stelvio this time, except for bagging the photo of the control on the top. The descent this way around from the top of the Stelvio pass had a couple things to note. Firstly, we found that someone has the unenviable job of mowing the grass on the verges of the alpine passes and had performed this 'magic fairy' like miracle at some point overnight. Secondly, marmots are amazing! These hardy little rodents seem to spend all day chilling out (literally) on glaciers, running out in front of TRs on hairpin bends and digging out holes between the rocks. Amazing little animals →



Lining up for the regularity test on track at Circuito di Franciacorta near Brescia.



Castle Schloss Lichtenstein.





... Great museum to Spa Francorchamps in Stavelot.

→ to be able to survive up there, especially when you consider that Winter starts in September and lasts until May.

Before long, we had arrived in our last hotel in Italy, near Merano and were sat by the pool, overlooking the edge of the mountains and an incredible valley that stretched out below us, with the city at one end and a seemingly endless swathe of orchards and vineyards, clinging to the steep sided slopes of the Alpine foothills, at the other.

We had, so far, enjoyed a relatively drama free trip with no mechanical problems to speak of, but elsewhere in the field, things were not going quite so smoothly, as Kim Durden from TR6 S14 explains: *"The fuel problems that plagued us last year had been extensively and expensively fixed. So, the intermittent engine stoppage as we headed for the Belgian border must have been electrics. A non-English speaking Belgian mechanic who we encountered asked "Triomphe?" "Catastrophe!" and made the sign of the cross as we left his garage forecourt. The RAC van with mechanics Simon and Mike had not left London when they heard about our problems, the TR spare parts were already in Liege, so we could have a new coil fitted as long as we could limp to the start,*

*which we did! It was to become the story of our trip, intermittent problems, one of which was finally diagnosed as fuel starvation and the new fuel pump replaced with another one; sorted. The slave cylinder on the clutch went and then the replacement also failed shortly after. These problems always picked their moments, on the Brenner Pass, the Stelvio and the Gavia, we have been towed over some of them!"*

It is worth explaining at this juncture that the Liège-Brescia-Liège offers the comforting backup of an RAC van, fully kitted with tools and hundreds of spare parts for all models of TR plus the expertise of a professional breakdown crew. Simon and Mark were great guys and very much a part of the event with their wit and often dogged determination to ensure every single car made it round. There was a sting in the tail however. Crews were perfectly allowed to use their advice and even the loan their tools, but if Simon or Mike laid their hands on your car, then you were hit with a massive points penalty – one that could quite possibly put a crew out of contention.

The next day saw another impressive mountain climb. The lofty, but easy going, Passo Pennes was accessed out of the city Bolzano by threading our way through dark



... TR6 returning over the Stelvio Pass.

tunnels, climbing for over an hour. Every tunnel emerging out into ever more wild and stunning scenery until we arrived at the wind-swept, but beautiful, summit. You got the sense that this pass had been left off all the tourist leaflets and had been largely forgotten – it was all the better for it. The Brenner Pass hurried us across the border into Austria and then north, deep into the dark, spooky forests of Bavaria.

When we emerged, the terrain had flattened out and one passage control gave the opportunity to savour one final look over our shoulder at the Alps, as the route would now take us on into the flat arable lands to the south-west of Munich.

The passage controls were getting harder to find now, much harder in fact. One took us the best part of an hour to track down and in the end was discovered off the main road, at the bottom of a secluded, hidden layby. I was getting a sense that these little tests were included to test our resolve as the rally entered its closing stages. TRs became scattered across rural Germany, meeting at junctions in the middle of nowhere, before conferring for a time and then disappearing off again in different directions.

I was happy to have made it into our hotel by Lake Starnberg that afternoon and was proud of our performance. Some mechanical checks took place here as the front wheel, which had been continually squeaking all week, was removed again and the brake pads stripped out to ensure all was working as it should be – happily it was!

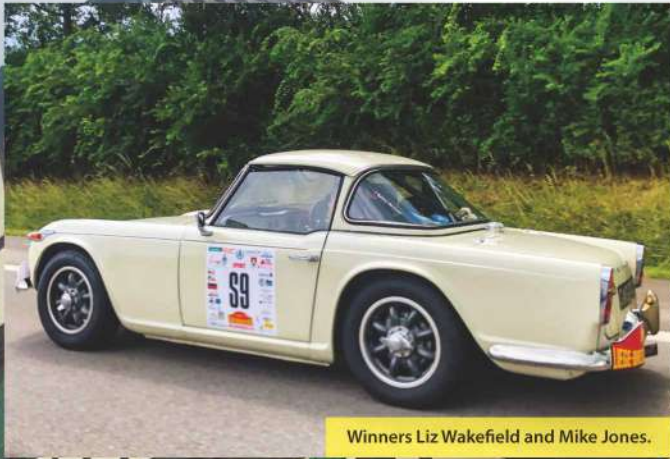
The maps however were by now ripped to shreds and graffiti ridden with notes, controls and multiple colours of highlighter pens from both directions of travel.

The mood that evening was particularly celebratory, as James had the dinner table in hysterics with tales of his previous life as a GP removing items from orifices.

Next morning Kim Durden updated me as to how things were going for them, now that →



Parked up under armed guard in the centre of Bretten.



Winners Liz Wakefield and Mike Jones.



Passo di Gavia.



Regularity test out on track.



→ they had seemingly solved their collection of mechanical dramas. Kim said, *"Democratically taking turns to drive and navigate, we took some wrong routes and we adopted a "no blame" culture. But we also fell about laughing when I managed to navigate into a multi-storey Car Park and had to pay \$1.50 to get out!"*

There was more of the same as we headed for the Wolfegg Automuseum which had an interesting 'History of Porsche' display and a Matra Simca with the worst case of orange peel paint I have ever seen!

One control was closed due to an inaccessible road and another featured a level crossing that on the map, looked like it could have been any one of five in the area!

Another museum followed in Enstingen, then we crossed into Lichtenstein for a control at the Castle Schloss Lichtenstein, an impressive Gothic building inhabited by The Herzog van Urach who is a cousin of the British Royal family.

It had been a very, very long day with multiple road closures delaying us and even my GCSE German had received a work-out asking for directions, so it was fantastic to find that, upon arriving in Bretten to complete the penultimate day, we were once again parked in a busy, cobbled town square. This time though, we had armed security guards laid on to watch the cars overnight, courtesy of the mayor.

I was feeling distracted however, as a mis-calculation was nagging on my mind. I had run out of clean underwear. Don't ask me how, I cannot have packed enough and it was now an issue. I decided to solve the situation by washing said smalls in the sink and hanging them out on the window ledge. Luckily, it was warm and I knew they would be dry soon. Pleased with myself and looking forward to fresh undies, I hopped into the shower. As I walked back to the window ledge some minutes later, I realized with horror that my underwear had all gone! I got dressed, went downstairs and apologetically retrieved the offending pants and socks from around the dinner tables of the lovely, classy restaurant below and sheepishly snuck away, doing my best to hide the embarrassment – and my pants – from public view.

It was all to play for on the final day of the Liège-Brescia-Liège rally. The efforts of the last ten days could have been won or lost on the regularity section at the Kart Track that morning. This was the same circuit that we had tackled on day one so at least we knew where to go. This time, we were given a much slower target time to catch us out. By now though, I had my eye in and we crossed the finish line having only dropped 1.5 seconds.

On the whole, the controls that followed the regularity trial were pretty straightforward and even a road closure after the Rhine Ferry did little to faze us, until we got to control 99 of 103. It was a control that will forever be known as "that ba\*\*\*rd bus stop"! We went up and down the road where I thought it should be, but it was nowhere to be seen!

Everyone else seemed to be going in all sorts of different directions as well and to add to the stress, we were in the middle of the busy city of Trier. It took us nearly two hours to find that photo control and what followed was a sense of immense relief, the sort of relief you might feel when you stop banging your head against a brick wall.

No time to dwell on it, we had to drive as quickly as possible and keep up a relentless pace as we were now at risk of a late arrival penalty. We did not want to drop out of the top three with the end so close in sight. Dave drove a storming stint and I was glued to my maps plotting alternative routes to gain us more time without missing any controls. We flew across the border into Belgium and hammered down the tight and winding back roads of the Belgian countryside, until we breathlessly arrived at Abbée de Stavelot, in time for check in, at the final control.

We had done it. There were hugs all round, everyone sharing in each other's elation at having made it to the end, battle weary but on time. We had a celebratory look around a stunning museum, showing artefacts from racing at the nearby Spa Francorchamps circuit, before posing for a photo at the finish line and heading to Liège for the prizegiving dinner.

Smart but creased clothes were unraveled from the now chaotic depths of the TR6's boot and we headed off for an amazing night of laughs, fun and stories. We scooped third place



The gang of crews gathered in the city square in Liège – Jeff Roberts w

overall in our class and were awarded a very substantial cup and commemorative plaque. It was presented to us by Remo di Cocco, the man that had competed in the original event for micro cars back in 1958.

Addressing the room, organiser Malcolm McKay said, *"Well done, you made it! You have just completed an Endurance Rally in the old style; at times daunting, often demanding, relentless, exciting, exhausting and emotional. You have had highs, lows and mechanical*

## FINAL RESULTS

### SPIRIT CATEGORY

1. S9 1966 TR4A Liz Wakefield/Mike Jones 10
2. S1 1960spec TRS Paul & Jan Gerring 12
3. S12 1972 TR6 Dave Burgess/Wayne Scott 26
4. S10 1967 TR4A John & Jane Hicks 92
5. S2 1961 TR4 David Hankin/Karl Boulton 94
6. S4 1962 TR4 Simon Hendra/Nigel Kendall 110
7. S11 1972 TR6 Ian Barker/Sheila Hutton 156
8. S6 1963 TR4 Mark Rachtet/Alain Lacroix 172
9. S8 1965 TR4A Catherine & Graham Hills 330
10. S14 1973 TR6 John & Kim Durden 726
11. S15 1976 TR6 Martin & Dorothy Goodall 1510
12. S5 1963 TR4 Andrew Kirkham/Katrina Mackay – Tour

### AUTHENTIC CATEGORY

1. 11 1960 TR3A Andy English/John Smallwood 22
2. 8 1959 TR3A Jeff & Jeffery Givens 28
3. 7 1957 Wrks TR3A Iain Paul/James Butler 32
4. 6 1957 TR3 Mike Wing/Caroline Metcalf 60
5. 5 1957 TR3 Andrew & Gill Heywood 102
6. 9 1959 TR3A Ian Vincent/David Wilson 110
7. S3 1954 TR2 Neil & Sue Revington 126
8. 14 1960 TR3A Nick Sharp/Kate Handley 140
9. 12 1960 TR3A Andy Jackson/John Broadley 196
10. 4 1956 rally TR3 Jeff & Lesley Roberts 262
11. 1 1953 TR2 Vincent & Arthur Paccellieri 502
12. 2 1954 TR2 Mike & Frances Grace 1920
13. 3 1954 TR2 Michel Goldé/Jean-Louis Gillet – Rtd
- N/A 10 Skoda Eleanor & Graham Goodwin – Tour

### TEAMS

1. Team 7 (7, S1, S2) 138
2. Bollox (6, 14, S3) 326
3. Two 2s & a 3 (1, 2, 5) 2524



...erts was last in so takes centre stage.

I will never forget the amazing experience that the Liège-Brescia-Liège Rally gave me and the great people I shared it with. To each and every one, but especially to my crewmate Dave Burgess, I must say a massive thank you for the company and friendship; you made the event what it was. Furthermore, huge thanks to the mechanics, Simon and Mark, marshals Jane and Mark and to Malcolm and Helena McKay and their little daughter Fiona for all the work they put in to give us our "trip of a lifetime!"

### Want to join the action? Sign up for TR Pyrenees 2021!

Following the great success of Liège-Brescia-Liège for TRs, we're delighted to announce a new TR Register – exclusive rally from LBL Rallies and the TR Register for those who missed out last time on the Liège-Brescia-Liège.

We are giving you two years to get your TR in shape, as this event will be held on October 8-18, 2021 – the date late in the year is deliberately chosen for two reasons, to avoid clashing with the annual international TR meet in September, and to ensure quiet roads throughout the route.

The weather should still be warm and dry, especially in northern Spain – as ever, our rally is much more than it appears, because it includes not only several days of superb driving through the Pyrenees, but also heads deep into northern Spain on stunning, empty roads taking in the wonderful wine region of La Rioja (where we will visit a superb Bodega and the first 20 cars to reserve a double or twin room will stay in the Bodega's own hotel), visiting several superb race circuits for special tests, and giving time off to enjoy such delights as Tarragona (once the capital of the western Roman Empire, with superb remains) and Morella, a delightful walled mediaeval town to which cars normally have no access. We meet local enthusiasts and we head north through the tiny country of Andorra, where we also stay and are welcomed in the excellent national motor museum. The rally ends with a Triumphal convoy into the astounding walled mediaeval city of Carcassonne – normally closed to vehicles.

We launched the event at the recent Triumph Weekend at Stratford Racecourse and entries are already flooding in. We therefore recommend getting your entry form in asap with a £250 deposit: this will hold you a place on the event and can be discounted from the first full payment when it becomes due – or refunded up to that point if something comes up and you're unable to make it after all. Please contact Malcolm McKay on 0044 7711 901811 or email: [classicallypress@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:classicallypress@yahoo.co.uk).

challenges, but ultimately it will have been unforgettable."

I could not have put it better myself.

James Butler, who had navigated for Iain Paul in his works prepped TR3A said at the end: "I cherished the camaraderie that developed. The hairs on my arms were on end and I had a tear in my eye as Iain's TR3A climbed the Stelvio again after sixty-odd years. This was balanced with the melancholy I felt when we arrived in Stavelot on the final day when I realised that I would not be navigating again the next day in a rally. It was over and I couldn't stop shaking because of the adrenaline that I



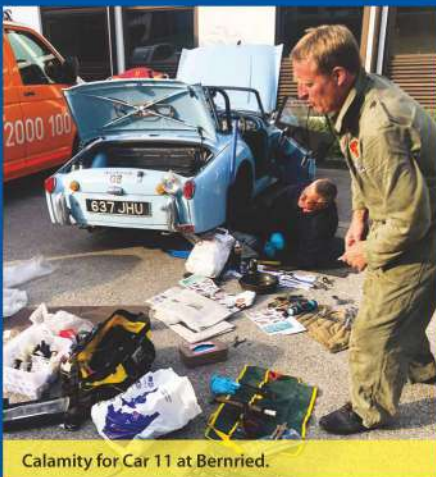
The cup.

had been living on for the previous 10 days."

Kim Durden offered her review on the event saying: "Bowling along in the TR6 always makes us grin. Through stunning scenery, it was even more amazing. Mostly back roads, wonderful trees, gravel roads, numerous road closures to test our navigational skills to the limit, more hair pin bends, than I've ever seen in my whole life and some were even cobbled! 36C in an open topped sports car could get a bit much when trapped in a traffic jam or waiting by the side of the road for the RAC van. But we also had hail stones and pouring rain (when the windscreen wiper fell off and had to be retrieved from the middle of a roundabout; it worked better after being run over). We had nothing but admiration for our fellow competitors who checked out on time, navigated accurately, spotted all the relevant hot spots and arrived before check in time for a shower and a change for dinner. For us, just getting to the end was a terrific achievement."



Neil Revington was very chuffed to have bagged this control point.



Calamity for Car 11 at Bernried.