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1 January to 31 December
Social \$45
Motorsport/Competition \$65
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(2 adults + kids under 18 - Family rate allows up to two competition members.)
Note: Applicants who wish to join part-way through the year will be charged a pro-rata membership fee based on the number of months left in the membership year. See the application form for details.

Meetings

Southern members meet on the final Tuesday of each month, January through to November, at the Civic Club, 134 Davey Street, Hobart.
The committee meeting is held between 6.30-8.00 pm. Drop in any night.

CMI's AGM is generally held at 7 pm on the last Tuesday of November at the Civic Club, Hobart.

All contributions to Veloce Nota are welcome and when published earn points towards the Clubman of the Year Award.

Please send all letters and contributions to The Editor: cmi.editorial@gmail.com

Disclaimer

While every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of the information, advice and responses in this newsletter, neither Club Motori Italia Inc nor its officers or members accept liability for any loss or damage arising.

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A very brief mag this month, due to the editor being ill, a lack of material and a number of other things. Still, any mag is (probably) better than no mag!

The awful events toward the end of Targa Tasmania have affected us all, and they have brought the wowsers out in force.

Anyone who has ever talked to me about tarmac rallying will know that at some time in the conversation I will always say, 'You know, it's really dangerous.' All of us who do it know that, and as I said in my after-dinner speech at the Targa dinner, we don't need to be told it's dangerous by people who have never done it and couldn't do it.

The event was unusually slippery this year, which made for six says of tension and quite a lot of discomfort. Both my driv-

er and I were suffering from head colds at the end, which didn't help our dispositions. It did make it all the more satis-

fying to achieve my goal: a Diamond Targa Trophy.



Presidential Patter

Cars and motorsport are emotional things. The Baskerville super sprint gave me cause to feel relief, excitement, pride, joy, happiness, gratitude, and satisfaction. I felt relief that I finally got to a CMI event and was no longer a president *in absentia*. I felt excited to get back out on the track and drive at speed for the first time in a long time. I felt satisfaction that my car performed well and that I may finally have overcome the overheating problem I have been chasing for a few years. I felt happy that fellow enthusiasts enjoyed the new colour scheme of my car. I took joy from watching my son compete in his first track event and was proud he did so well. I felt gratitude to the officials who volunteered their time to run the event and make the event a success.

I felt pride again earlier tonight at the committee meeting when the club received an award from Motorsport Australia for the '2020 State Event of the Year – Tasmania'. The award was for the Domain Hillclimb and this further justified the hard work that went into saving the event.

Ultimately though at the time of writing the overwhelming emo-

tions I feel are shock and sadness. The three deaths in Targa served as a reminder that the sport/hobby which we all love and which gives us so much can also take everything.

Robert



Here's a way of checking valve clearances without doing any calculations. It's based on finding the actual gap between camshaft and valve or 'bucket'.

This story was first published in issue No1 of RACE Magazine in 2005. I have brought it up again as even more vehicles have arrived on the scene with shim adjusted OHC engines, since then. Also, there are many more sporting motorists actively competing who were very young back in 2005, so will not have read this story at any time previously. This is for the members who do their own engine preparation and maintenance, or do it as a business.

Many high-performance four stroke engines now use overhead camshafts that act directly on a bucket above the valve stem, with a replaceable shim for valve clearance adjustment. The shim may be clipped onto the valve stem or it may be in a recess in the top of the bucket. Either system uses a range of shim thicknesses to maintain the correct valve clearance over the life of the engine. There was originally shims available in 0.05mm differences, however, eventually some cost accountants changed that to 0.10mm gaps, deciding that would be close enough and that halved the range that they needed to carry in spare parts. Us sporting motorists prefer to be closer than the accountancy decision of being too tight or too loose on valve clearances!

Camshafts are manufactured to exacting standards, ground with an opening ramp that uses all of the valve clearance to gently begin the lifting of the valve off the seat in a controlled manner before the more rapid valve ac-

celeration takes place. Too much clearance can cause the cam profile to bang the valve off the seat too rapidly which can cause an uncontrolled bounce against the bucket and cam lobe. The closing ramp is designed to gently lower the valve back onto the valve seat. With the larger valve clearance, the valve will slam back onto the seat and probably bounce a little bit. Thus, you can start to appreciate how important it is to set the valve clearances to the correct clearance.

Additionally, factory valve clearance settings are usually specified at a cold engine condition because the engine manufacturer knows the expansion rate of the various metals in the valve train. With aftermarket camshafts, on billets or regrinds, these usually list specified clearances at the engine operating temperatures. This is because the cam grinder doesn't know (or care) what valve materials are in the engine. They could be genuine valves, or stainless steel, or titanium. Each has a different expansion rate, thus must only be set at the engine operating temperature.

Fiat, Lancia, Volvo and VW Golf all have a recess in the top of the bucket for the location of a large, thick and heavy shim that rubs directly against the camshaft lobe. With the use of special tools, the shims are very easily removed and replaced without disturbing the cam timing. There is a little bit of oil in the cam box, but this is not a very messy job, when done correctly!

However, with Alfa Romeo, Jaguar, Toyota and Lotus-Ford twin cams, to name just a few, plus many hi-performance mo-

torcycles, the valve adjustment process is much more complicated, with a lot more mess involved! These engines use a very small shim that sits between the end of the valve stem and the underside of the bucket. The top of the bucket rubs against the camshaft lobe, so must be of good material. To change the valve shim to a different thickness, the camshaft must be removed from the cylinder head, and also the buckets – which must be kept in the correct order, as they are removed, so they will go back into the same location on reassembly. This is fiddly, time-consuming and very messy, but is used when very high revs are expected and is necessary for the level of performance required.

Whatever bucket and shim engine you have, you really only want to do the job once, so a little bit of preparation is required, with just basic measuring equipment. A set of good feeler gauges, a shim thickness dial indicator or micrometer, a pocket calculator, pencil and paper pad. A clean, neat and tidy workbench goes without saying, right? Never remove the spark plugs; the loose carbon specks falling onto an open valve can give a false clearance measurement that you will regret later.

On the note pad, draw up a simple box chart with two columns, one labelled inlet, the other exhaust. Label the boxes for the cylinder numbers so we can record the existing valve clearances which are measured at the very back of the cam lobe. I always put cylinder No1 in the top boxes, No2 in the next boxes down and so on. For four- or five-valve cylinder heads, just number the valves in order from the front cylinder. Insert various

feelers until we get a snug, dragging feel between the heel of the cam lobe and the bucket or shim. Now record the feeler size in the correct box, then rotate the engine by hand to the next cam lobe clearance to be measured. I just do them in firing order as it saves time and effort rotating the engine but you must remember to record the feeler thickness in the correct box. No. 3 goes into box No. 3, No. 4 into No. 4, etc.

When you have measured and recorded all the valve clearances, it's time to start changing the shims to restore the correct running clearances. With the first shim removed, measure the thickness, together with the feeler gauge that was a snug fit. The thickness is written on your chart! The feeler gauge, plus shim thickness, is the running gap we must record and maintain when the correct feeler gauge is added to the replacement shim, as calculated. Often shims (supposedly) of

the same thickness will have a slight variation, thus by measuring the new shim and with the correct gap feeler gauge, this should be the running gap measurement we require. If not, keep swapping shims until you have the closest (tight shim) to that measurement. Next valve, repeat this process!

The mistake many operators make is they don't bother measuring and recording the running gap, when that is the important measurement that is so easy to access. Shims can be thinned by rubbing the non-camshaft running side on some wet and dry tape/ paper until you get it to the running gap size you require. Then wash it, oil it and install it! I fondly remember spending many hours one Easter Sunday rubbing some Subaru shims on 250 grit paper to get the running gap clearances correct on a race engine that was being assembled in Melbourne, over Easter, to be raced in Sydney on the next weekend! Who needs finger-

prints anyway?

Once all the shims have been replaced, where necessary, to the correct thicknesses, and the cams reinstalled if they had needed to be removed, you can be very confident that all the clearances will be correct. Above-bucket shims should be lubricated and the wet and dry surface (one side only!) must not be installed to rub on the cam lobe! Turn the engine two full rotations before then finally doing the final(?) valve clearances check. If you have followed this process to the letter, you should be so close to perfect on all clearances as to be 'close enough' until the next checkup!

Pic below shows the system: Measure the removed shim and incorrect feeler gauge together, then use same measurement with the correct feeler gauge and adjust shim to suit. Almost no maths involved!



I had only one ambition for Targa Tasmania 2021: to win a Diamond Targa Trophy for my third lot of three Targa Trophies in a row. Once again I was co-driving Ken Gover's 1981 Porsche 911 SC; Ken has never failed to finish a tarmac rally, so he was a good bet.

Things were complicated by the fact that elder son John had taken over 'my' seat in John Stanton's Porsche 924 Turbo in Thoroughbred Trophy, and younger son Michael had taken over 'my' seat in Jeffrey Wilson's Subaru WRX. It's a long and complex story, which I'm not going to bore you with. So the whole family was involved: Mary drove our VW ambulance and organised accommodation and meals for most of us, and my daughter Alice had lent her Turbo Golf to Geoffrey, John S and me to do recce.

Every day was wet, with just enough patches of sunshine to raise hopes, and just enough rain to make nearly every stage properly wet and often slippery. Ken and I were passed by all and sundry, and an Alfetta on Poatina peppered our wind-



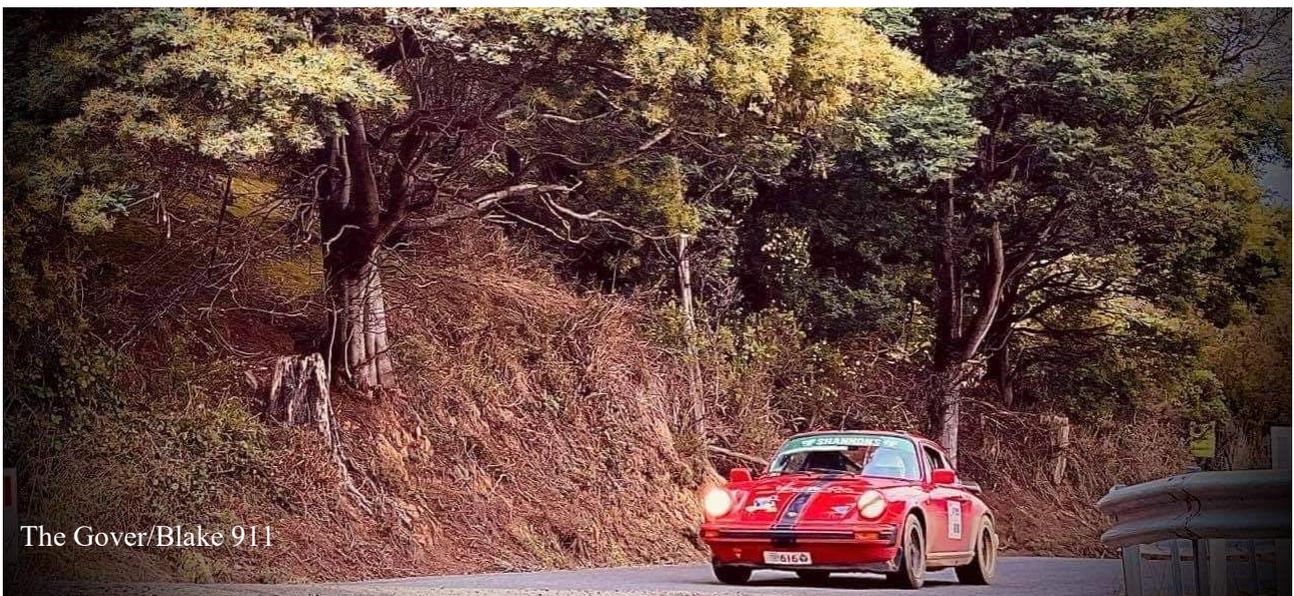
The Stanton/Blake 924 Turbo on Targa High Country

screen with stones and cracked it in two places. Luckily we got it repaired about two minutes from the Silverdome. We tried at the same time to get our steering wheel repaired, as it was flopping about due to a collapsed bush. No danger of it falling off, but very unnerving. It remained unfixed.

That was about it for car problems. You could reach in the window and turn the key, and the Porsche would start with a roar first time, every time. There

were lesser inconveniences, like my helmet having to sit on the floor soaking up water on the longer transport stages. (All serious rally cars leak.) I once said to Ken, 'How are your feet?' and got the response 'Like two blocks of ice.' Later that same cold day I asked him whether he had had any communication from his feet recently and he said 'Yes. "We're cold"'. I was telling first-timer John Stanton that he would really enjoy Palooka and Mount Roland

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The Gover/Blake 911



on Day One...but unfortunately as he and JB crossed the finish line at Moriarty the sump plug fell out, filling the car with smoke. John Blake stepped up to the plate by phoning Porsche in Hobart, finding out the plug's specifications and sending the service crew off to an engineering works in Devonport to get a new one made. While they were gone he dispatched John Stanton back up the road in case he could find the missing one. JS followed the trail of oil and it led him straight to the plug, still lying in the road. They now had a spare sump plug, but unfortunately they missed two of the classic stages of Day One – and their Targa Trophies.

Day Three had taken us to Strahan, and Day Four was an extremely lengthy one that took us back up to Burnie and then inland to Gunns Plains, Riana etc. The average stage length on this day was enormous, and we were seriously tired when we arrived at Strahan in the dark.

This was our second night in Strahan, where as usual we stayed aboard 'Stormbreaker', and enjoyed two hilarious dinners on board. Although we all had to be careful, we made inroads into the State's wine

stocks over the six days.

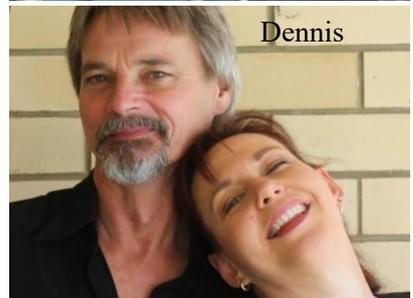
The stages were damp, slippery and glare-filled on Day 5, and there were written warnings at the start of Mt Arrowsmith that from 33 km on, the road was unusually slippery. It was. Some combination of factors had left it even more greasy than usual.

We did the long and largely uneventful run down to Tarraleah and then to New Norfolk for the lunch break, where we heard the dreadful news that Shane Navin had been killed in his RX7 at Double Barrel Creek, 35 kms into Mt Arrowsmith.

After a sombre night, we looked forward to getting through the final day. On the first stage, Pelverata, we were flagged down and informed that a car had gone off in front of us. When we stopped again at the crash scene about 300 m further on, we still couldn't see the car. Then David Gilliver and Nigel Shellshear emerged from a building and gave us the thumbs-up. Their (still invisible) Ferrari GTS had demolished a shed. The first run through Gardners Bay, Oyster Cove and Cygnet were to be followed by a repetition of each, but as we tried to turn into the Cygnet stage for the second run

we were waved on through to Longley. On reaching Longley, the final stage of the event, we were told to take our helmets off and go through at road speed. This was when it dawned on us that there had been a really bad accident on Cygnet.

It turned out to be two of our friends – Leigh Mundy and Dennis Neagle in their Porsche GT3RS. Both were experienced and well-known competitors – as was Shane Navin. They will all be missed, not only by their loved ones but by the whole tarmac rally community. Rest in peace.



Big win for CMI

Below is the handsome award taken out by CMI at the Motorsport Australia Awards—Tasmanian Motorsport event of the year for 2020. Well done everyone, and special thanks to Norman Henry for coming up with the idea all those years ago!



The night before the start of Targa Tasmania 2021, thoroughbred Trophy front-runners Jack Waldron and Vin Gregory heard that Vin's wife Marilyn had had a fall at their Melbourne home and was in hospital. They decided that Vin would do the first day and a replacement navigator would take his place.

Enter CMI stalwart Graham Mitchell, who had not rallied for 14 years, had never read pace

notes, had never sat in the car and had never used a Rallysafe device.

After a shaky start, Jack and Graham began to hit their straps, gradually pulling out a lead over the second-placed car – the Porsche 924 Turbo of John Stanton and CMI member John Blake.

The two Johns had some trouble and missed a couple of stages, but the third-running Fiat 124 Sport of David Currow and Kate

O'Donnell had even more, Kate being incapacitated by food poisoning on the second day.

That's how they finished, and with the big points from Targa Tasmania added to earlier performances, Jack and Graham were the new Motorsport Australia Targa champions, with the two Johns finishing second in the series.



Coming events

Sunday 16 May—Cryptic run and lunch. Contact Graham Mitchell on 0418 173 102 to book your spot.

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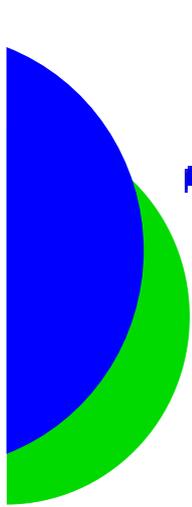
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