



I pulled the TR-3 into my driveway at 5:25 PM on Sunday June 16<sup>th</sup>. This completed the 2013 Triumph Tour which started at 8:00 AM Saturday June 1<sup>st</sup>. A large portion of this time was spent in the driver's seat of the TR-3 and from this vantage point I was able to experience parts of the country that I had never visited before.

Our group\* toured the grass lands of the high plains states of Oklahoma, Kansas and Nebraska, the Bad Lands and Black Hills of South Dakota, the Rocky Mountains in Wyoming, Colorado and New Mexico. All told our group traveled over 4300 miles in our Triumphs on beautiful Triumph friendly roads and we took in some wonderful sights along the way.

This was all made possible by our fearless leader, meticulous planner and accomplished cat herder, Dave Smith. We all know that Dave was a high ranking Naval Officer and I expect he was a master at putting together operational plans. Dave put together the route, made all the reservations for our accommodations and selected all the points of interest for the tour. All we had to do is show up. Further, Dave put together a book with our daily agendas and detailed maps on our routes. Each day all we had to do is open our books and our orders of the day were before us. On behalf of your fellow travelers, thank you Dave! The trip would have been a lot less fun without your guiding hand.

Thanks to Dave's fine planning efforts the tour was like a vacation from the flat topography, heat and congestion of Houston. During the trip we enjoyed challenging roads with exciting curves and elevation changes. In some cases it was like rowing the car up the hill with the shift lever only to be followed by the exhilaration of trying to hold the curves on the downslopes. Most fun were the mountain passes where we would climb to high altitudes and were chilled by snow covered mountains. My favorite drive was through Rocky Mountain National Park where we climbed to some 12,000 ft. and enjoyed breathtaking views. Overall we enjoyed good weather, however, we had to deal with some heat in Wyoming, Colorado and New Mexico. The Iron Man Top Down Award goes to Russ Seto. Russ kept his top down for the entire trip. Dave, Doug and Mike kept their tops down most of the trip. In my case, after three days my skin was burned to a crisp and my top stayed up for the duration. This was really unfortunate since with the top up much of the incredible scenery was minimized.

One of the nice aspects of the trip was the interest generated by our five cars. Along the road people gave us waves and thumbs up. This was particularly true of the motorcyclists we passed on the road. Every place we stopped people approached us, took pictures and complemented us on our cars. We also had many former owners approach us and tell us of their experiences with Triumphs. During the entire trip we did not see many sports cars and in particular any British sports cars. It seems Motorcycles have captured the touring public's interest. There were literally thousands everywhere we went. We had days of hard driving and days where we took in attractions and drove very little. Other than the natural attractions, my favorite stop was the Clive Cussler's museum in Arvada, Colorado.

\* TTR Travelers included John Reynolds, Russ Seto, Dave Smith, Tyler Smith, Doug Trapp, and Mike Vukelich.

Cussler is a very successful author who weaves classic cars into the text of his novels. Cussler's collection contains winners from Pebble Beach, Meadowbrook and Amelia Island. We all had our favorites; mine was a 1929 Blower Bentley.

I expect you are interested in the winner of the Fred Wagner First to Break Down Award. The results are not completely clear. I guess we have to better define the criteria. My TR-3 would not start after stopping on a 12,000 ft. high pass in the Rockies. It seems the old bus did not like the rarefied air. We put a tow rope on it and Mike Vukelich pulled me to get started. This happened once again on another high altitude pass but this time we simply pushed the car down the hill and it started right up. Subsequently, I leaned the carburetors and the startup problem went away although the car still did not like the high places. My vote would be for Mike Vukelich's TR-8. This would make the TR-8 a repeat winner of the Fred Wagner First to Break Down Award. Mike had problems with the ignition cutting in and out and finally the car would not run. It is fortunate that this problem happened when and where it did. We were about to climb Pike's Peak. We sent out our fearless leader and he came back with a recommendation for a garage in Colorado City that specialized in exotic cars. Dave then towed Mike's TR-8 to the garage and within a few hours Mike was running again.

While the garage was working on Mike's TR-8 we took off for Pike's Peak. We were not allowed to go to the summit due to high winds, however, we were able to get within a couple thousand feet. We all make it up to the highest available point, however, Dave had to take a break due to overheating. The roads up the mountains were a real challenge for the cars, however, the views were spectacular and the temperatures nice and cool.

Later in the trip Russ Seto also had a problem with a serious loss of oil which was discovered to be a faulty oil filter. We were wondering where all the oil was going until we looked at our windshields after following Russ. In true TTR fashion, Russ drove his TR-3 up on a curb and exchanged the bad filter for a good one. Doug Trapp was the clear winner of the Loud and Stinky Award with his TR-6. Mike Vukelich and I were ready to go out and buy supplied air gear until Russ Seto leaned out his carburetors. This did nothing for the noise but at least we could breathe. Interestingly, Doug was the only guy who had no significant problems. Maybe loud and stinky works best.

All in all we had pretty good performance from our old cars. Five started and five finished and we all had a great experience. I am ready for next year. I figure my backside will be recovered by then.



*Get Involved!*

*John Reynolds*

