

Montana 500 Newsletter

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Montana Cross Country T Assn.
1004 Sioux Road
Helena, MT 59602

www.montana500.org

2015 Officers and Directors:

President: Tom Carnegie 2017
Vice President: Mike Cuffe 2017
Secretary: Jillian Robison
Treasurer: Janet Cerovski 2017

Directors:
Mike Robison 2016
Doug Langel 2016
Mark Hutchinson 2016
Mike Stormo 2015
Sergio Hernandez—resigned-resignation not
accepted.
Dennis Powers 2015

Meeting Secretary: Jillian Robison
Correspondence: Tom Carnegie
Newsletter Editor: Tom Carnegie

Membership dues \$10.00
Touring class: \$35.00
Endurance runner: \$35.00

Cover photo: A vidcap from Mike Robison's
Youtube video "Montana 500 2015"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UX0r7WhaF7M>

If you have a photo that you would like to see on the
cover of the Montana 500 newsletter, please send it to:
montana500@antiqueautoranch.com and I'll see what I
can do!



President's Propaganda

In my humble opinion, the 2015 Montana 500 was a wild success. Even with the unplanned route delays, it still came off pretty good. The flaggers and timers did a great job as usual. The trouble-truck people took care of all of the trouble. The computer input person did a fine job (thanks Sean). The hotel was good. The weather was good. The only rough patch for me was the unnecessarily contentious teardown. This seems to be an annual problem. I still think some sort of tear-down is required, but I presume that the matter will be taken up at the fall meeting, which incidentally is in Thompson Falls at the Rimrock. We have had it there several times and it seems to work out ok. We will meet at 11:00 a.m. on Oct. 11th. You will have time to eat before the meeting, if you so desire.

We held the 2015 Montana 500 in conjunction with the Rocky Mt. club's tour. It didn't quite work out the way I had hoped. We will be in touch with the folks of the Rocky Mt. club to try to find out the best way to co-mingle in the future. If anyone has thoughts on this, send them this way.

Whenever two or more people are involved in anything, compromise is almost surely needed. This is especially true for the Montana 500, I believe. There are things about the run, especially the rules, that I would rather see done some other way, but I realize that there are reasons that they are the way they are and changing them could be difficult for one reason or another. Still, I am careful not to "badmouth" the rules. I try to understand them and defend them to people outside of the run. In the past, I hadn't always done this. At some point I decided that it gave a bad impression to potential drivers to run down the thing that you are trying to build up. There was an example of this at the 2015 run.

We had a car show of the combined two clubs on Sunday. There was a downpour and most of us sought shelter under the hotel walkways. Two people involved with the Rocky Mt. club were overheard talking about the teardown rules of the Montana 500. The conversation went something like this: "The top five drivers under the winner inspect the winner. It is just like the fox guarding the hen-house. They just rubber-stamp the winner."

Besides the horrible analogy of the fox and hen-house (Who is the fox? Who are the hens? Are eggs involved?) it broke my heart when I heard this. For one, I don't think it is true. For two, if someone is saying this, they have likely been fed this by a Montana 500 driver.

Why poison the well?

During the run, I knew that my motor was not acting right, but I couldn't figure out what exactly was wrong. The problem got progressively worse as the run went on, until at the end my motor would barely run. Absolutely no compression on number three. Well, it turns out that my motor gobbled a valve seat. Totally ate it and spit it out the exhaust. It beat up the top of the piston and the bottom of the head, but the bore looks pretty good. I am amazed that the motor ran as well as it did on three cylinders. The faster I went, the better it ran.

I had talked to Sergio before the run. He told me that he couldn't make it as he would be celebrating his mother's 90th birthday. He asked if Garrett could take over his director-ship. I said that I didn't think he could transfer his director-ship, but if he wanted to resign, we (the directors) could perhaps appoint someone to take his place. It was my understanding that this is what Sergio wanted. As such, I announced his resignation in the newsletter. At the run I was informed that Sergio did not want to resign. Since we didn't have his resignation in writing, we decided to not accept the resignation (if indeed there was one).

Think of where you might want to hold the 2016 Montana 500. The town of Columbus has been lobbying us rather heavily to hold it there. Do you have a preference?

If you have questions, you can e-mail me at:
montana500@antiqueautoranch.com

2015 MT 500
Mike Robison

People often tell me “Wow, you’re tall!” or “You’re a big guy!” It’s something that I often look past because to me my perspective has always been “my perspective”. So this brings me to the Montana 500. I’m going to let you see what it is like from my perspective.

Since I first brought Jillian to the 500 in 2002, she thought she needed to participate. I was game. What guy doesn’t want his girlfriend/wife to be interested in the same hobbies as he is? In 2004 we built “Pinky T”. Every year we’d make the pilgrimage to the various small towns and cities in Montana. Every year Jillian would finish respectably. I won a couple times, but it wasn’t until her Mother in-law (Nan Robison) won in 2010 that Jillian said to me “I need to beat your Mom” AKA I need to win!

It happened that in 2010 Jillian’s engine had a bearing failure. It lost a connecting rod pulling Rogers Pass. This gave me the enthusiasm to freshen up her engine. In 2011, she finished 2nd (behind me). Now, I

really wanted to win a second time and wasn't going to let Jillian HAVE the win. She had to earn it just like all those before her. In 2012, she finished 3rd. In 2013, 2nd. For the 2014 run I went through her engine again, pulling out nearly every trick I know. About a week before the 500 she had the fastest car in Spokane, except she had a main bearing making a bit of noise. I pulled the engine down, tightened the mains and put it back together. Another 2nd place finish. This really wasn't acceptable, but in a way, the timing was perfect. On the last leg of the 500 she was the fastest car. I took notice of the mileage and various other factors and decided to park Pinky! (editor's note: We call this "peaked and parked".) This wasn't the most favorable option in Jill's eyes, because she loves to drive her T.

Those of you who have multiple cars know how taxing it is getting two or more Model T's ready for the 500. Getting one ready is hard enough. I felt that I had to get my car going stronger. Every year since my last win I'd fallen in position, as I had ignored my car in the pursuit to make Jillian a winner. I tinkered on mine in the evenings after work and tested and finessed Jillian's

on the weekends leading up to the 500. One weekend after getting beat by Tom in his “dedicated car” on our pet test track, I knew it was time to pull out all the tricks on Jillian’s car. (notice I left some in the bag from before!). The ignition got a full tune up, the exhaust got replaced and the carburetor was switched. This time before the 500 her engine was staying in the rails; but I digress. My car was still in shambles. One week before the 500 my T wouldn’t go faster than 35mph. I checked compression and was disgusted, I adjusted the valves and rechecked compression... My car was hot, fast, dare I say, a contender!

We loaded up the whole damn fam, and headed for the hills. Nearly a non-stop run to White Sulphur Springs from Spokane, checked in with the hotel and crashed in our room. That next morning I unloaded and took the cars out. Jillian’s car was impressive. Topping out at 60+ mph heading out of town. I hopped in my T and ran it up slowly to the high 50’s... I was happy with this. I knew that I was just going to be “along for the ride”. The first morning I was relaxed. So relaxed that I was joking with the other participants that if “You get

passed by a T, it'll probably be Pink". After claiming this, I hoped I wouldn't have to eat my words, but recent history had proven that the probability of this was high.

Now, prior to this I have failed to mention that I felt a great deal of responsibility for a couple of other drivers. Those drivers were Al Whiteside and Brandon Langel. This was Al's first year he and Brandon had the An-

tique Auto Ranch build engines for them. These engines internally are exact copies of Jillian's engine. The night prior to the beginning of the run I was contracted to provide Brandon with a top assembly for his car. That evening he and I installed the top in the parking lot.

We flagged out for day one headed south to Helena. I was near the front of the pack.



When It was my turn I was more concerned that Al Whiteside wasn't going to come back. He headed south towards Helena when it wasn't time for him to flag out. I got the go ahead and raced after Al, when I reached him I waved, saluted, and yodeled to get his attention. It seemed to work because he flipped a u'y and headed back! We were stopped before our scheduled stop for construction (this would come to be standard operating procedure for the 2015 run). I had moved to the 2nd place flag out position. At the end of the construction we waited and waited, finally my wife arrived. (This is another stressful thing only those who have multiple cars can experience.) I counted the positions. She was moving forward.

I brought along a GoPro camera with the hopes of capturing the essence of what the 500 is like for me. I produced and uploaded a video to Youtube. <https://youtu.be/UX0r7WhaF7M> It wasn't long before Jillian was right behind me. This leg happened on the way up Kings Hill but luckily for me I held her off before reaching (once again) construction. We regrouped and flagged out a 1/2 mile from the top. I was the first out. The scenery was beauti-

ful. I met a couple of elk cows, and a few doe before cresting the top where I held the seat as tight as I could with my rump! I blazed an impressive trail down the hill, but it wasn't long before a pink T was in my mirror. I mean it wasn't long before a pink T was out of my mirror and in front of me. We reached White Sulphur, fueled our T's and grabbed a drink at the store before the next car arrived. I looked at Jill and smiled.

Day Two was much like day one, lots of me passing other T's. My T was running well until it wasn't. I thought I was running up a large headwind. I glared out the side of my T examining every blade of grass calculating the angle of the bend to determine my speed in relation to the angle. When the grass failed to bend and my speed continued deteriorating, I knew I had a problem. Many of the T's I'd passed on prior legs were again regaining their position. I fiddled with every control trying to coax as much power as possible from my car. It was a lost cause. I peered into my rear mirror and took notice. Al Whiteside was tailing me. Concerned for my status he waited to see if I need assistance. I

waved him by and he powered on into town. When I arrived at the hotel My T had a strange exhaust sound. I took a compression test and there was almost zero. There was no compression stroke. It went from intake to exhausting. The group that had gathered by now determined my timing had slipped. I checked the camshaft snout and it moved independent of the crankshaft. I removed the cam in the parking lot and was amazed to find my modified cam had broke at the front cam bearing. I made the quick decision to pull the cam and replace it. Dan Brown happened to carry a spare! In fashionable time, I swapped cams and was back on the road.

Day three I was happy to be back on the road. All I had to do was maintain my position. This would be hard to do with a less aggressive cam profile. I was passed by Dennis Powers, Nan Robison, Tom Carnegie and finally by Mike Stormo before the day was over. When the results were tallied, Jillian had retained her position I had fallen one and Dennis had taken my 2nd place spot. Jillian had done what she came to do, beat her Mother In-law!

(end of story)

2015 Results

	Name	Hometown	Miles	Total	Avg.
1	Jillian Robison	Valleyford, WA	493	09:04:07	54.4
2	Dennis Powers	Ogden, IA	493	09:12:54	53.5
3	Mike Robison	Valleyford, WA	493	09:18:51	52.9
4	Nan Robison	Spokane Valley, WA	493	09:19:27	52.9
5	Tom Carnegie	Spokane Valley, WA	493	09:22:26	52.6
6	Mike Stormo	Davenport, WA	493	09:33:46	52.9
7	Bill Mullins	Spokane, WA	493	09:36:26	51.3
8	Dan Brown	Laporte City, IA	493	09:40:05	51.0
9	Gary Ebbert	Port Orchard, WA	493	09:46:04	50.5
10	Dan and Dwayne Lukowski	Kansas City, KS	493	10:08:34	48.6
11	Rick Bonebright	Florence, MT	493	10:08:46	48.6
12	Mike Cuffe	Eureka, MT	493	10:09:32	48.5
13	Al Whiteside	Cheney, WA	493	10:37:54	47.1
14	Janet Cerovski	Helena, MT	493	11:08:34	44.2
15	Gary Yeager	Cheney, WA	493	11:19:59	43.5
16	Jamie Allen	Spokane Valley, WA	411	11:07:43	49.9
17	Tony Cerovski	Helena, MT	370	10:15:46	51.7
18	Brandon Langel	Kalispell, MT	356	11:15:06	45.2
19	Garrett Green	Orange, CA	274	11:23:15	51.2
20	Alex "Sandy" Watt	San Diego, CA	153	11:27:02	48.6
21	Rick Carnegie	Otis Orchards, WA	78	12:20:57	45.3
22	Mark Hutchinson	Spokane, WA	14	12:36:26	

2015 Montana 500 Leg by Leg
Tom Carnegie

Before leg one even began, Garrett Green lost his rear axle, so he rode with me all of day one.

Leg one was meant to be from White Sulphur Springs to Helena. The construction deities had other plans. There was a pretty good hill and I passed my first car on it. It was Dan Brown, who was under his car along side of the road. About 20 miles into a 70 mile leg, we were stopped for construction. Mark Hutchinson decided to pack it in on this leg as his car was not running well at all. The top five cars on this leg were: Mike Robison, Jillian Robison, Dennis Powers, Tony Cerovski and Tom Carnegie.

Leg two was from the construction to Helena. Along the way we had what I believe is the first ever "rolling timeout". The way it worked was that the cars never stopped, yet they were timed out and then back in again on the fly. It worked a treat. So leg two was actually from the construction to the rolling flagout before the Canyon Ferry dam. There was a hard right at the bottom of the hill where the flashing light was. Most of us made the corner. One did not. No names mentioned B.L. The top five cars were: Jillian, Tom, Mike Robison, Dennis and tied for fifth, Tony and Bill Mullins.

Leg three was the short leg from the rolling flag out to Helena, about eight miles. The top five were: Jillian, Mike Robison, Tom, Nan Robison and Mike Stormo.

We formed up at the Town Pump and flagged out right onto the freeway on ramp. Al Whiteside and Gary Yeager were sent out in front. The wind was to our backs and there were some good down hill runs. My T hit 75 miles per hour at one point, which is the fastest that I've ever been in a T. The top five on this leg were: Jillian, Mike Robison, Dennis, Mike Stormo and Nan. Jamie Allen lost a rod on this leg. Rick Carnegie seized his motor on this leg (plugged oil line).

For leg four we toured the twenty miles or so towards Belt and flagged out on Highway 89. We were just heading up King's Hill when we hit construction again. The top five were: Dennis, Nan, Jillian, Mike Stormo and Tony.

Towards the top of the hill we flagged out. Then it was down the other side and in to White Sulphur Springs. The top cars were: Jillian, Mike

Robison, Dennis, Tom and Nan.

Alex Watt dropped out, so Garrett took the rear axle assembly out of Alex's car and installed it into the "Green Machine". Garrett would run on day two. Jamie repaired his car and ran on day two too.

Day two we headed to Harlowton. The top five were: Mike Robison, Jillian, Nan, Mike Stormo and Tom. There were wrong turns and cars ran out of gas on this leg. I won't mention any names B.L.

Next was Harlowton to Livingston for lunch. More wrong turns by people. The top five on this leg were: Jillian, Mike Stormo, Mike Robison, Dennis and then Nan.

Livingston to construction. About 15 miles from the flag out. The top five for this truncated leg were: Jillian, Mike Stormo, Mike Robison, Dennis and Garrett. Tony and Brandon Langel dropped out on this leg.

Construction back to home. Mike Robison broke his camshaft, but managed to limp in. He would repair it and continue on day three. The top five for this leg were: Jillian, Mike Stormo, Dennis, Garrett and Tom.

Day three, a simple loop by Martinsdale and back home. It was not to be. Sheep interposed themselves onto the road way. The top five cars to the sheep parade were: Dennis, Nan, Mike Stormo, Tom, and Garrett. This is the only leg where Jillian was not in the top five. In total, Jillian was first or second on every leg except two.

The last leg was back to the starting point. The top five were: Jillian, Dennis, Nan, Garrett and Dan Brown.

Gary Ebbert's best leg was on day one from the construction to the dam. He came in 7th on this leg. Janet Cerovski's best leg was from Belt to King's Hill. She was 8th on this leg. Mike Cuffe's best leg was the first leg of day three where he came in 9th. Dan and Dwayne Lukowski's best leg was Helena to Great Falls for 11th on this leg. Rick Bonebright's best leg was the first leg where he finished 11th.

All in all I felt that it was a pretty strong field this year . Half of the cars averaged above 50 miles per hour.

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