

Lazy, Mechanically Inept and the Winner in the Un-restored Category

By Dave Doroghy

To be honest with you I have never thought of the All British Field Meet as a competition. Although I have been attending it as a spectator for 12 years and as a participant for the last three years, I have always just considered it a wonderful celebration of British cars and beautiful flowers. Relaxing, sitting in my cushy collapsible lawn chair next to my 1966 Plus Four Morgan on a sunny spring day, while friendly people admire my car, has been my prize for attending the event. I suppose in the back of mind I was somewhat aware that while I interacted with my cars onlookers, a contest was somehow and somewhere taking place at VanDusen Gardens. Oh sure the entry form for the show has you tick off a classification for your car, but I always thought that was just for record keeping purposes, not for a contest. Besides how can you even have a contest and rank and judge 650 unique interesting British cars and pick the best one. It would be like a mother having to choose her favorite child.

That's why I was so shocked and dumbfounded when I found out that my car had won first place in the Un-restored Category at this year's show. I didn't even know that there was an Un-restored Category. Imagine how I felt when I found out I had placed first in a competition I hadn't even entered?



O K , I vaguely remember three kind of serious looking guys dropping by my car at around 11:00 am at the show and carefully viewing it. One of them was from our car club, and one of them had a clipboard. They looked official. It is only now that I realize that they were judges. At first I thought that they worked

for the Car Show organizers and that maybe my \$25.00 cheque to enter the event had bounced, and

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they were sent to collect the outstanding fee. Then when I saw one guy writing down notes on his clipboard I figured maybe I was parked in the wrong spot. I have a tough time telling the difference between Plus Fours and Plus Eights, and Four Plus Fours and Eight Plus Eights. I was never good in math.

But as it turns out these guys were actually judges, sent to carefully assess my car, and rate it against the 70 other un-restored vehicles entered in the show. While I sat in my comfy chair ignoring them, sipping my coffee and breathing in the fresh garden air, they were meticulously inspecting every nook and cranny, every detail and every aspect of my cars un-restored heritage. I didn't pay much attention to them at the time, nor did I understand or care what they were fussing over. When they asked to see the engine I considered the request a bit of a nuisance because it interrupted my semi slumberous relaxed state and I had to toil with the difficult to release latches on my hood. What a hassle.

Now that I have had a chance to reflect upon my victory I have a few thoughts. First of all I don't really understand all the different judging categories or how they work. It strikes me as odd that you would get a prize for being lazy and doing absolutely nothing to your car. I bought the Morgan because I loved the way it looks. Aside from being a lazy car owner that has never gotten around to restoring my car, I am also the most mechanically inept person you would ever want to meet. It is somewhat embarrassing for me to belong to a club with so many knowledgeable and mechanically gifted people. A grease monkey, wrench puller or motor tinkerer I am not. My perfectly manicured fingertips are a testimony to the avoidance of screwdrivers, ratchets or anything remotely resembling something sold at Canadian Tire. I run at the mere sight of a Snap-on-Tools truck.

Prizes are usually awarded for a talent, skill or a unique quality that takes effort. The un-restored car category is really for losers. Guys like me who buy a car, store it in their garage for years and don't ever touch it. Since when is apathy, and ineffectiveness meant to be awarded? How is it that being a maladroit has garnered me all this notoriety and adulation. It seems unjust to reward inaction and inability. Having been in sales for most of my career this latest accomplishment seems totally counter intuitive. I am usually awarded for my initiative, motivation and for my industrious ways. In this case I am being put on a pedestal for being clumsy and unambitious.

Now don't get me wrong. I appreciate the award, and am grateful and happy to have received it. In the last few weeks I have derived a tremendous amount of pleasure in telling my friends and family of how great me and my car are. And hey as part of the prize I also won a dozen bottles of Pennzoil 10W – 30 motor oil. I'm not sure what they are for but my mechanic will know. The plaque I won will be proudly hung up next to my car in my un-restored garage. The garage is something else that I have never gotten around to restoring or fixing. The roof is starting to leak in the un-restored garage, but now I have an excuse not to have to work on it. If I ever decided to enter it in a garage show I wouldn't want to jeopardize winning in the Un-restored Garage category.

And for those of you that belong to the car club that think that all of this award winning is going to my head, you can relax. I am still the same old humble, unassuming Morgan owner that I always have been. Nothing has changed with me. Well maybe just a couple of small things...at next years show, please don't park too close to me. I'd be so mad if you opened your door and nicked my beautiful un-restored fender. And when you come over to speak to me at next years show, please make sure that you are not holding a hot or cold beverage in your hands. I just can't risk something being accidentally spilled on my beautiful un-restored paint job. Come to think of it please don't drop by to visit with me when the judges are viewing my car. I wouldn't want those important men to be distracted during those crucial judging moments.

As far as next years event is concerned, you can rest assured that my beautiful British racing Green 1966 Plus Four with only 30,000 original miles on it will remain un-restored. Who wants the hassle of working on a car when you can win such great prizes for doing absolutely nothing?

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