



The Watkins Glen Grand-Prix Festival roared to life on Friday, September 6, 2024, and I couldn't resist the thrill of witnessing it firsthand. As I drove into town, the excitement was palpable, with the streets transformed into a vibrant hub of motorsport culture, showcasing an impressive array of events, clubs, and merchandise.

Franklin Street was closed off, allowing the historic old track to come alive once more. This year, the festival diverged from its usual coordination with the Vintage SCCA event at the Watkins Glen race track, but it didn't dampen the spirit of the celebration.

The highlight of the day was the exhilarating run on the old road course, which had been the battleground for racers from 1948

to 1952. This iconic track winds through the heart of Watkins Glen, featuring legendary spots like the "White House S," named after a famous turn in the LeMans circuit, and Cornett's Stone Bridge, where Denver Cornett dramatically flipped his MG into the creek during the inaugural race. He managed to roll it over, scavenge parts from fellow competitors, and still finished seventh! Then there's Milken's Corner, where William Milliken famously overturned his Bugatti in 1948, emerging unscathed to the cheers of spectators.

The festival kicked off with groups of classic cars, starting with the Porsche Speedster group—about 24 roaring machines from 1954-1959 celebrating their 70th anniversary. They were joined by a fleet of Lotus cars, from the classic Europes to the nimble Super Sevens and sleek Evoras. As they thundered down Franklin Street and climbed the steep hill at a sharp 90-degree turn onto Old Corning Hill, it was clear this was no ordinary parade lap; the energy was electric!

This year, the MG was the featured marque, marking its 100th anniversary. It was a sight to behold, with a stunning lineup of cars from various eras hitting the circuit, each one a testament to automotive history.

Later, the “Legends Speak” event in the park brought together racing luminaries. Glen Moore, an MG historian and racer, shared tales alongside Denny Cornett, son of the infamous racer Denver Cornett, and Roger Linton, son of legendary racer Otto Linton. Their stories echoed the rich legacy of racing at The Glen.

This festival isn't just an event; it's a thrilling adventure that revives the passion for motorsport and connects enthusiasts across generations. I left feeling exhilarated and inspired, eager for the next opportunity to relive this remarkable celebration of speed and history. For more details, check out the festival website at <http://www.grandprixfestival.com>. What an unforgettable experience!

[To view the video of the MGs starting their laps, click here.](#)