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An Introduction to the Michael R. Argetsinger Symposium Issue for the Journal of Motorsport Culture & History

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An Introduction to the Michael R. Argetsinger Symposium Issue for the *Journal of Motorsport Culture & History*

Remarks from Duke Argetsinger of the International Motor Racing Research Center

The International Motor Racing Research Center (IMRRC) is honored to collaborate with the *Journal of Motorsport Culture & History* in presenting this Michael R. Argetsinger Symposium Special Issue devoted to cultural and historical themes in the evolution of motor racing. The IMRRC, in conjunction with the Society of Automotive Historians - and more recently with the participation of the Popular Culture Association – has hosted the Michael R. Argetsinger Symposium on Motor Racing History annually since 2015. Regrettably, this year’s sixth annual Symposium was postponed due to the pandemic.

Over the years, the Symposium has provided a valuable platform for motor racing scholars to present the results of original research projects to their peers and other interested parties. It is open to the public and, over the last two years in particular, has gained a growing audience of students and enthusiasts. This 2020 Special Issue of the *Journal* allows us to maintain momentum and preserve this important scholarly forum for the motor racing community.

The IMRRC was founded in 1998 in conjunction with the 50th anniversary of racing at Watkins Glen. Leaders in the international motor racing community seized the opportunity to create an institution whose sole purpose would be to preserve and share the history of motorsports. “There are many great automotive and racing museums around the world,” remarked three-time World Champion Sir Jackie Stewart at the gala opening of the facility in June of 1999, “But what has been created at Watkins Glen, a center for archives and real research, is truly unique and a tremendous asset to the whole racing community.”

The Symposium is named in honor of my brother, Michael R. Argetsinger (1944-2015), an award-winning motorsports author and longtime member of the IMRRC’s Governing Council. Under his leadership the IMRRC, a world class facility rich in archival material covering all forms of motorsports from around the world, organized meetings, lectures and conferences that brought – and continue to bring - a wide range of experts and motorsports enthusiasts to the research center. Michael’s efforts to establish the Symposium and its’ success were vastly enhanced by the participation of Dr. H. Donald Capps, now President of the Society of Automotive History, and the support of Michael’s wife Dr. Lee Green.

A prominent figure in the motor racing world, Michael was the author of several definitive books on the sport. His first book, *Walt Hansgen: His Life and the History of Post-War American Road Racing* (2006) received a Gold Medal for biography and was

named Best of Books for 2006 at the International Automotive Media Awards (IAMA). His biography *Mark Donohue: Technical Excellence at Speed* (2009) was also named Best of Books by IAMA. Other books followed, including *Formula One at Watkins Glen: 20 Years of the United States Grand Prix* (2011), a finalist for the 2011 Dean Batchelor Award presented by the Motor Press Guild and a posthumously published biography, *An American Racer: Bobby Marshman and the Indianapolis 500* (2019).

Michael was not only a vivid chronicler of the sport, but was a competitive driver for nearly 45 years, competing in more than 400 races at 54 different circuits in seven countries. Michael grew up in a motorsports family - our parents Jean and Cameron Argetsinger were founders of the Watkins Glen races, brought international Formula One racing to America, and were leaders in the founding of the IMRRC. Michael's legacy is well served by this Symposium issue, providing inspiration to the many motor racing historians and aficionados he cultivated and nurtured in his lifetime as well as for the motor sports world of today and the racing chroniclers of the future.

Please enjoy these fascinating articles, solicited from the scholarly community and edited by the *Journal's* distinguished editorial board, and do make plans to visit the IMRRC in Watkins Glen, whether to tap into the Center's extensive collections for your next motor racing research project or just to enjoy the ambiance and excitement of the world of motorsports.

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Remarks from Mike Stocz, Editor-in-Chief for the Journal of Motorsport Culture & History

From all of us associated with the *Journal of Motorsport Culture & History* (*JMCH*), we welcome you to our special Michael R. Argetsinger Symposium issue! Without the Argetsinger Symposium, *JMCH* would not have come to fruition. From a personal stance, I attribute much of my renewed vigor professionally to the Argetsinger Symposium and the attendees, many of whom have become my closest friends and colleagues.

I first attended the Argetsinger Symposium in 2018. My research background, as related to motorsport, is media communications based. I was, and still remain, exceptionally pleased by the feedback and enthusiasm shown not just for my research, but all forms of motorsport research presented at each Argetsinger Symposium attended. Following my first Argetsinger Symposium, Dr. Timothy Robeers and I struck a conversation at the Elmira airport- what if we had a journal to publish motorsport related works in? We had been unsuccessful to that date in so much as establishing a special issue for other journals, while other motorsport academic journals seem to

perish or not be framed within our research interests. The rest, with groan-worthy puns included, is history.

Due to the inclusiveness of our newfound colleagues, we absolutely made it a point to combine sociocultural, greedily including media communications-based studies, and historical works as the scope for *JMCH*. We initially thought it would be a five-year plan, although when we dug into the 'how-to's' for running an academic journal, we decided that we could launch the next year. In the span of two issues, we've grown in the number of submissions and published articles at a rate of six times over since the initial issue. I largely credit the Argetsinger Symposium, and a few dreams of freshly minted researchers, as the inspiration and groundwork for success for the *Journal of Motorsport Culture & History*. I would be remiss if I did not mention the support we have received from colleagues at the Society of Automotive Historians and the Popular Culture Association.

In particular for this issue, I would personally like to thank Dan DeRusha, Duke Argetsinger, and all of the staff at the IMRRC for collaborating with us on this special issue. Due to the Coronavirus pandemic, this year's Argetsinger Symposium was cancelled as an in-person event. We decided against hosting a virtual Argetsinger Symposium, and instead, developed this special edition in lieu of the cancellation. Next, I would like to thank Dr. Timothy Robeers & Dr. Mark Howell, *JMCH*'s associate editors, as my go-to folks for setting up our second round of article peer-reviews. I would also like to thank our reviewers, whom I will keep anonymous to ensure continued constructive feedback for our future issues. I would also like to thank our editorial board members, Alonzo Maestas, Esquire, Patricia Yongue, Don Capps, Kate Sullivan, and Ryan Benner for their support and suggestions since the early stages of *JMCH*. I would also like to thank our manuscript authors, who have worked hard to deliver quality manuscripts to this issue.

I also want to thank you, the reader, for keeping the interest in motorsport alive and well! I hope that you will consider writing a manuscript for *JMCH* in the future. Feel free to email me (mstocz@una.edu) if you would like any feedback on an idea, or just need some motivation.

I also hope that you will join us for the next Argetsinger Symposium in the beautiful Watkins Glen, New York, next November! We typically hold the Argetsinger Symposium on Veterans' Day weekend in November, or the weekend just before. The presentations run the spectrum of history and culture, from historical accounts dating back to the early days of automotive ingenuity, to media analyses dedicated to capturing the pulse of racing personalities, to even bus racing! Creative juices flow in the shadow of motorsport greatness throughout the burrow of Watkins Glen as we continually keep history alive throughout a jam-packed weekend of thought-provoking lectures and interactive activities! The ideas presented herein would not be possible without one of those thoughts coming to fruition. For more information on the Argetsinger Symposium, and the IMRRC, please visit www.racingarchives.org. If you

can, please support the IMRRC and all they do to preserve and create academic opportunities in motorsport!

We hope you enjoy the articles contained in this issue, with diverse topics ranging from the founding of 1938-1940 Formule Internationale, to an overview of Bentley, Cuban Automotive history, the foundation of vehicle manufacturers, and two observations of sim racing during the Coronavirus Pandemic! I also personally hope you will join in our on-going conversations and efforts to promote and keep automotive history alive and well throughout the 2020's and beyond!

Mike Stocz, PhD

Editor-in-Chief: *Journal of Motorsport Culture & History*

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