



# The Bluegrass Star

A Publication of the Bluegrass Stars Section  
Mercedes-Benz Club of America

Fall 2015 Volume 1, No 3

## Editor's Message

The 2015 MBCA National Elections are currently underway. There are currently three candidates for director-at-large this year. Terry Kiwala from Chicagoland Section, Jim Luikens from the Western Michigan Section, as well as Steve Ross from the San Diego Section.

Voting is also taking place for the regional directors. This year the only candidate for our section is Rick Siefert of the St. Louis Gateway Section. He was hugely instrumental in getting our section back on its feet and though there is no one running against him, it still reflects well to cast our votes and send him our support.

Post Card ballots and other information on the candidates can be found in the September-October 2015 edition of the Star Magazine. Ballots must be recieved no later than October 15th.

In local news. Friend of the club and Louisville native, Jim Patterson, took home the coveted Best in Show award at this year's Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance with his 1924 Isotta Fraschini Tipo 8A. This is the second time he's taken home the award.

Finally, the latest club raffle is for a brand new Mercedes-Benz GLC 300 4matic. Details and entry information can be found in the latest Star Magazine. Be sure to enter for your chance at this newly named SUV.

## Welcome

As always, if there is anything you would like to see our club do in future events, any topic you would like to see written about in the newsletters, or anything you would like to contribute in general to helping our club, please feel free to contact any of our officers listed in the contacts. We love hearing feedback and any idea is greatly appreciated. There is opportunity for advertisement of both businesses and classified ads within the newsletter as well. Also, if you are not getting post or E-mail messages, or know of someone who should be in our section but for some reason isn't getting notice either, please let us know so we can correct it. Thank you all for your support.

## Upcoming Event

First and foremost, the Concours at French Lick this year the first weekend in October has been canceled. No reason for the cancellation has been given but they do hope to return in the future.

<http://www.frenchlickconcours.com/>

**Saturday, October 24th at 10AM** there will be a Tech Session meeting at AWR Imports LLC. 223 Adams St, Louisville KY 40206. The subject on hand will be a live demonstration of what a trained mechanic should look for when considering a second hand car purchase. We will be hosting the Automotive Science Awards at the Louisville Regional and duPont High School science Fairs. There will be coffee and light refreshments.

**Saturday, November 14th** there will be a Bluegrass Bourbon tour. There will be a cruise to several of the bourbon factories in the local area with a couple stops for food as well. Details will be finalized in the upcoming weeks.

**Sunday, December 6th** will be our holiday meeting. This year it will take place at the Gasthaus zum Deutshen Eck at 451 N Wilson Rd Radcliff, KY 40160. There is seating available for 35. Wine and beer will be available for purchase.

Further details on the bourbon tour and the holiday dinner will be announced as the time draws closer via E-mail and post card.

## Racing Update

As summer hit its stride, so did the Teams of Formula 1. Canada turned out to be a wonderful Grand Prix for the Mercedes powered teams. With the Mercedes-AMG cars finishing in the front and the Williams-Mercedes of Valtteri Bottas using great strategy to keep a podium position thanks to an earlier error by Kimi Räikkönen.

The Austrian Grand Prix would prove to be another successful day. Lewis Hamilton achieved his 45th pole position to tie with 4 time champion Sebastian Vettel and Mercedes teammate Nico Rosberg starting in P2. As the race began though, it would prove to be Rosberg's day after a fantastic start with a new rules package in place.

Returning to the home of Formula 1, the British Grand Prix once again saw Lewis Hamilton starting P1. However, this time it was both Mercedes cars that had poor starts, allowing the Williams-Mercedes cars a chance to lead. Soon though Hamilton found his way back in front and would stay that way giving the championship points leader his third home Grand Prix win. The Force India Mercedes team also had a noteworthy day. After a struggling start to the season, a new car was brought out for the first time this season and showed promise with both drivers finishing in the points.

Hungary began as it seemed the entire season would. Hamilton out front next to Rosberg for a Mercedes 1-2 start. The day from there would prove to be anything but usual. Poor starts for both drivers and a short stint off track for Hamilton proved that the day was not one for Mercedes to shine. It would mark the first time since 2013 that a Mercedes powered car did not finish on the podium.

Spa and the Belgian Grand Prix were next on the calendar, and despite a slow start by Rosberg, Mercedes was definitely back in form. Rosberg quickly recovered from his start where he had fallen all the way back to fifth and charged up to second place. This, with Hamilton taking the victory, gave the Mercedes team another set of top finishes at the legendary race track.

Arriving in Ferrari's back yard, the Italian Grand Prix proved a challenge. With Vettel and Raikkonen taking the second and third starting positions, Hamilton was alone to lead the charge at the start of the race from P1. Although late in the race Hamilton had a comfortable lead and Rosberg's engine had failed in the last quarter of the race, a call came from the pit box that Hamilton needed to push his speed harder and further his gap beyond the already 20 second lead he had beyond the Ferrari powered cars. Later it was revealed that there was question raised about the tire pressure in the Mercedes meeting regulation which would have inflicted a time penalty had an issue been found. Thankfully, no such issue arose and the victory once again went to Hamilton.

The night race of Singapore took an unfortunate turn to break Hamilton's streak of pole positions. The top two rows of the race belonged to both Ferrari and Red Bull cars, relegating the two Mercedes to fifth and sixth. The troubles would only continue from there with a power unit failure keeping the points leader Hamilton out of the finish and teammate Rosberg only gathering a fourth.

Coming to Japan however, Mercedes was right back on point with the top three starting positions being held once again by Rosberg, Hamilton, and Bottas. A wild start by Hamilton led to him having a close call with his teammate. Hamilton would gain the lead for the rest of the race but Rosberg would have to fight back, pulling one of the bravest passes seen all year to get himself back up to a second place finish.



# I Know You're a Monster

There are many times when you hear of something too good to be true, something that it would be better if you just left it be and gone on with your way. This was something that I decided not to do when I got a simple message from someone. "I've heard a rumor of a 500E, it might be for sale." What followed was a series of three pictures, none of them were great in detail. A tiny profile shot showed that it was sitting uncovered in a field wearing a set of aftermarket rims. A rear shot showed the badge held true and the paint had been baked in the Texas heat. And a shot of the rear seat proved that it had everything inside you'd expect on the surface. This was in April.



The first image seen of the car.

By those three pictures alone, I committed to the idea of purchasing the car. It would be over a month before I got the final word on the vehicle. It was set to be on a truck with two other cars, until a terrible set of storms hit the area and news broke out about massive flooding occurring in the nearby areas in Texas. Thankfully, the car had already been loaded on the truck and was safely waiting for it's travel mates before making the long trip up.

After more waiting, the car arrived. The motor would turn over, but there was no start. The clean title didn't reflect a replaced fender and the sun had warped and ate away at more than just the paint. This wasn't even counting the several types of spider that took up residence in the car. When the vehicle was left in the field the fluids were left in it for better or worse. At no point did I question that I wanted this car.



Gasoline drained from the tank, normally clean and clear, contaminated beyond recognition.

The 500E is a car that is both hardly known, but already considered by many a modern classic. It was the last of the "perfect" cars. The vehicle was assembled by hand in the Porsche factory and paired to an engine from the 500SL. With the only big cues to the car's nature being the fender flares and the sport seats by recaro, few would expect this to be lighter and quicker than the SL sibling. By all measures it was a monster, rivaling the best sports cars of the world when it was new.

All in all the car still has a long way to go. With the old gas the color of sweet tea, some questionable wiring, and the hard to diagnose ABS/ASR problem that would doom a lesser car. But, after seeing what one of these cars can be at both Keeneland and Ault Park, I've never had more confidence that this one deserved to be saved from rotting in that field.



A long way still to go, but washing five years of dirt is always an improvement.



# Startech & Ault Park June, 2015

Pictures by Chad Rupe



The weekend started with a dinner at the Cincinnati Red's Diamond Club.



The turnout for Startech was amazing. The parking lot for the event had a wonderful array of cars from all over the country.



One of the star examples of the show was speaker Ted Gottfried's 1958 190SL that he used for his tech session.



Larry Gettleman getting his 280SL inspected for the survivor's award.



Saturday night concluded with a fine dinner. The Cincinnati Section did an incredible job with the event.



With Mercedes being the featured marque, the Ault Park Concours had a wonderful array of cars. As rare as they are, it was a great opportunity to see several healthy example of the classic SL.



# Keeneland Concours d'Elegance July, 2015

Pictures by Chad Rupe



James Motor Company brought cars new and old to their tent atop the hill at the Keeneland Concours



Two of the crowd favorites were the brand new AMG GT-S and the S550



In the Mercedes Benz Club paddock parking a wide variety of cars made a showing. From ML and E class cars to the powerhouse SLS AMG



Randy Bibb, President of the Nashville section, decided to bring his 1969 280SL up and enter it into the concours under the very diverse Sports Contemporary section.



# Louisville Bats Baseball August, 2015

Pictures by Chad Rupe



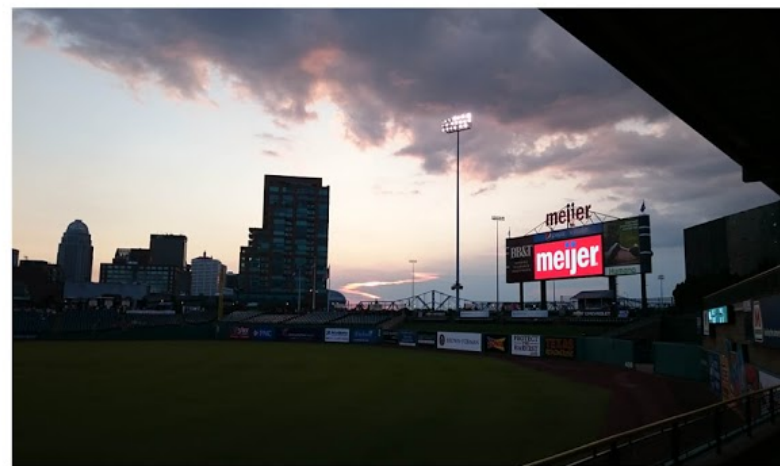
Even with a light shower wetting the grass before the first pitch, it was still a nice turnout for the ball game between the Louisville Riverbats and the Norfolk Tide.



During a small break in the action, one of the mascots decided to visit the patio and see what trouble it could stir up.



After all was said and done it was a great day for the home team. The final score ended up being a 4-0 win for the Bats



On the way out, the sun was setting giving us just enough light to navigate our way back out from the lawn.

## A Return of the G Cabrio & More Exclusive SUV

With Bentley's new Bentayga on the horizon and the concepts from Lamborghini and Rolls Royce also appearing at shows, a whole new level of Mercedes-Benz SUV's are rumored to be rising to the occasion. The current offerings of the long standing G class and GL class could be in store for more luxury with the Maybach line in order to give them a boost in exclusivity. Although current offerings can rise in price to well above the \$150,000 mark, the new competition is estimated to go even higher and appeal to people looking beyond that.

Also in the rumor mill, there is talk of the G class cabrio making a return. Previously, the only cabrio G that have been able to roam US soil were under the guise of the US Marine IFAV (Interim Fast Attack Vehicle). Needless to say, a consumer version would be adding quite a bit more luxury compared to the rough and tumble military spec version. These along with the pick-up truck mentioned in one of the newsletters earlier this year and the newly announced GLE coupe could all be great entries in areas that have been lacking in the Mercedes lineup.

## Mercedes-Benz Home Battery

Although Mercedes-Benz and Tesla Motors are both known for their luxury cars, a new line of product is in the works from both companies that soon could be coming to a garage near you. Being offered in Germany at first, the subsidiary Accumotive will be offering battery packs to be installed in homes and businesses that can store up to 2.5kW of solar power each. By combining several of these packs together a 20kW unit can be achieved for home use and even larger applications for business. The idea behind the battery is to provide a way to store energy gathered from solar panels during the day for use later during peak hours to alleviate how much is being pulled from the grid.

The Tesla "Powerwall" option, now available in Australia, starts at 7kW and a price of \$3000. With the Mercedes pricing levels not yet announced, we can expect the competition to help keep the prices reasonable. Until that point, as of writing all 38,000 Tesla units that were up for pre-order have been claimed so we will have to wait awhile longer before the US can begin the ordering process.



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by standard mail, E-Mail, or Phone

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## SLK To Drop Manual Transmission, Be Replaced by the SLC

Once upon a time, manual transmissions were the norm. Even cars as luxurious as Mercedes were no stranger to asking people to shift their own gears. As time has gone on though, that requirement has gone from a staple of driving to a rarity left only to the occasional sports car.

To the surprise of many, this included the sporty, little Mercedes-Benz SLK 250. As the SLK nameplate approaches it's final year, replaced in 2017 by the SLC, that option will now be dropped. The 250 engine combination yielding to the much more powerful 2016 SLK300. With the all new 9 speed automatic besting the manual transmission in both speed and efficiency, it was a hard sell for the outgoing manual.

Maybe one day the manual transmission will make a return. The automotive press has been craving an AMG with a clutch pedal since the tuning company became a part of Mercedes-Benz proper in the 90's.

Pagani and it's Zonda hypercar made a strong case for the combination of an AMG sourced V12 and a bespoke 6 speed manual still being on offer but only by custom order. Even if the sequential shifters of modern cars are faster, there's something about rowing your own gears that can't be replaced. It's the one luxury that no automatic can provide.

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## The Trading Post: Cars, Parts, and Accessories

If you have a Mercedes-Benz or significant M-B part that you would like to buy, sell, or trade, just submit your ad to the Editor, The *Bluegrass Star*. All ads must follow the submission rules and the suggested format as found in the back of The Star magazine. They will be listed at no charge to a section member; no commercial ads will be accepted without prior arrangement for payment. Your ad will appear in the next issue of The Bluegrass Star.

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## Discounted Parts

The following dealerships and shops have agreed to reduce by ten percent (10%) the total price of parts purchased by a Mercedes-Benz Club member with a current MBCA membership card. Restrictions apply; call for details.

**TAFEL MOTORS AUTOBAHN**  
4156 Shelbyville Road **MOTORS LLC**  
Louisville, KY 40207 1403 Hugh Ave  
(502) 896-4411 Louisville, KY 40213  
(502) 473-7858, See Don

**JAMES MOTOR AWR IMPORTS**  
**COMPANY** 223 Adams St  
2440 Richmond Road Louisville, Ky 40206  
Lexington, KY 40502 (502) 749-1002  
(859) 268-1150