

# Holbert Returns to Sports Car Racing

By JOHN COONEY

Of The Inquirer Staff

**B**OB HOLBERT is back in the sports car racing game . . . with a wrench in his hand instead of a wheel.

One of the greatest drivers the sport has known, the 44-year-old Holbert returned to the grid this spring as a sponsor and mechanic for a navy blue Porsche 911S.

"The excitement and a love of the sport drove me back to it," Holbert said.

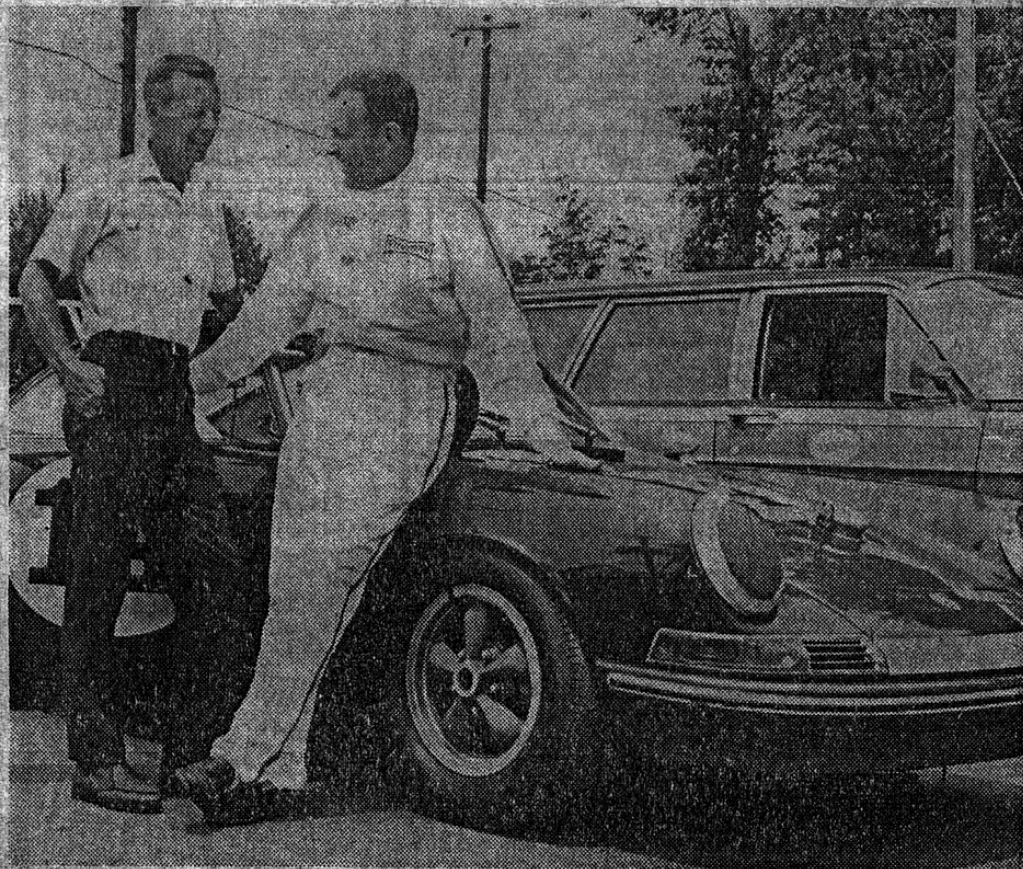
Today he works in his spare time on the car which is owned by two friends, Bert Everett and Steve Smith. He still devotes much of his energy to his job as a Porsche and Volkswagen dealer in Warrington.

Listening to the deep-throated exhaust rumble of the modified Porsche, he tried to pick up any tell-tale sounds which might indicate engine trouble since the car's race Sunday at Lexington, O. He seemed satisfied and walked away.

"This is about the best car in its class around, and it gives you the least trouble," he said.

"I'm disappointed that we placed third Sunday, but a fender got bent and we lost six

Continued on Page 36C, Col. 3



Bob Holbert (left) and Bert Everett have teamed up to campaign Porsches in racing competition. Holbert, long a nationally ranked driver, is sponsor.

## Holbert Returns to Racing

Continued from Page 33

minutes in a pit stop because of it. It made the difference between third and first or second place."

"Ifs" don't have any place in the sport, however, as Holbert well knows. From 1952 to 1964, when he quit racing, he won hundreds of events. He derived much of his fame from handling Porsches, although at one time he was a factory driver for Carroll Shelby's Cobra team.

He admits, "I won just about everything around."

"Everything" included the New York Times "Driver of the Year" award in 1958, 1960 and 1961 and the same award offered by Sports Illustrated in 1960.

The Porsche which reflects Holbert's mechanical skills is classified by the world court of sport cars, the Federation Internationale de l'Automobile, as a Group 2 Touring Car, which means a sedan.

Because of the class, Holbert

is a little worried about how the car will perform against bigger, heavier cars in future races.

"We held our own at Lexington, but I'm not too sure how we'll do later," he said.

More optimistic is owner-driver Everett.

"The bashed fender cost us a lot Sunday," he said. "But I think we'll fare a lot better at Watkins Glen (N.Y.) on June 25."

**A**BOUT the time Holbert was thinking about retiring from the racing circuit, Everett, two years his senior, was just whetting his appetite for the sport, now a full-time hobby.

Everett is a Doylestown resident who is the president and owner of Fine Grinding Corp. in Conshohocken. He said he was bitten by the racing bug about 1963 and has been at it since. He added that the \$8000 Porsche with the big number 14 on its side is the first car he's been

able to own as well as drive.

He said he's bettered 145 mph in the car and thinks he can push it beyond that.

"It's a matter of the driver being a computer,"

**E**VERETT is a former SCAA Northeast Divisional Champion and a veteran of last year's Trans-American circuit. He said he's sold on the sport and couldn't get away from it—even if he wanted.

Smith, the third member of the trio, is a New Yorker who is editor of Car and Driver Magazine. Smith is a "keen sports car enthusiast," and he may handle some of the driving in the future, Holbert and Everett said.

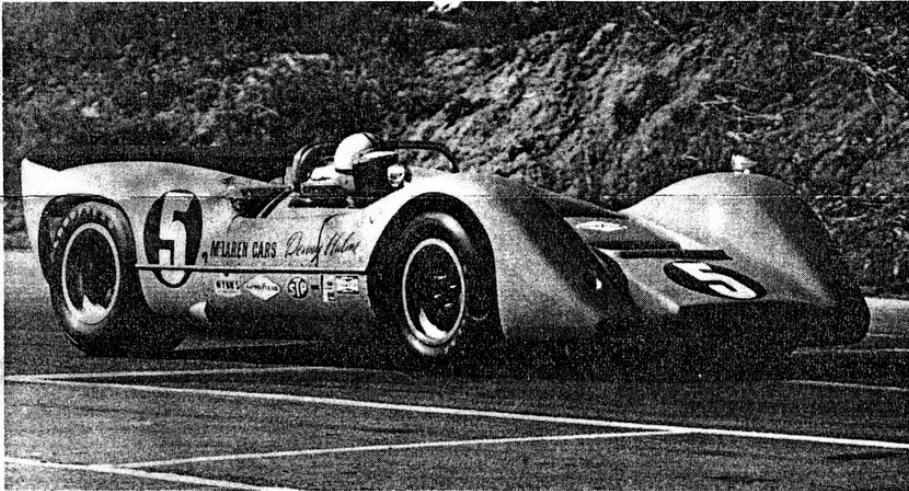
Everett said the car so far this year has won about \$2500. They didn't go into the field to make money but winnings have paid expenses so far.

"But we are looking forward to the \$10,000 night race at Daytona Beach on July 4," he said.



# WINNING WEEKEND FOR VALVOLINE

Sunday, September 17, was a good day. These drivers, all relying on Valvoline, were top finishers in three major road racing events.



**DENIS HULME**

FIRST

**BRUCE McLAREN**

SECOND

**BRIDGEHAMPTON, N.Y.  
CAN-AM SERIES**

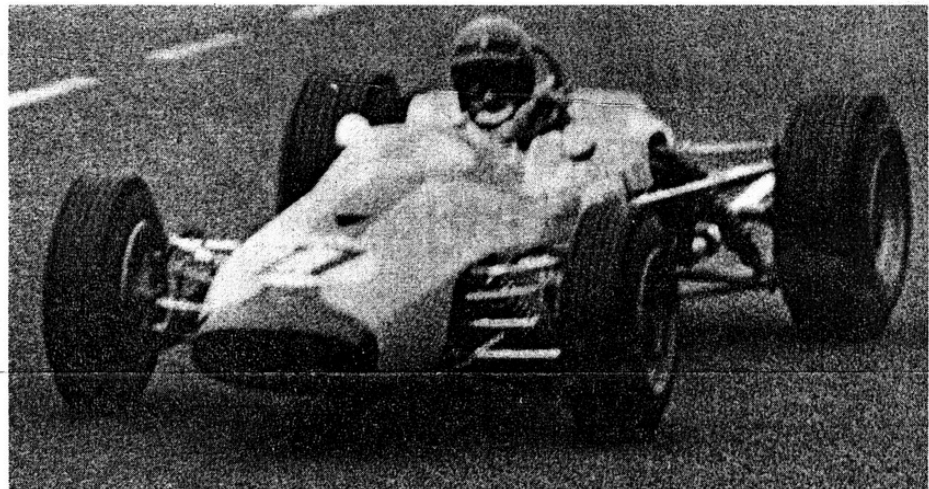
**FRED ASHPLANT**

FIRST

**MIKE CRONIN**

SECOND

**ST. JOVITE, QUEBEC  
PRO-FORMULA SERIES**



**BERT EVERETT**

FIRST

(UNDER 2-LITER)

**RIVERSIDE, CALIFORNIA  
TRANS-AM SEDAN SERIES**



PCA'er Peter Gregg outdrags winning Alfa GTA on long straight but the tables were turned in the corners as . . .

## Alfa GTA snubs 911s in Trans-Am

A determined Alfa GTA hustled around the twisty 1.5 mile track at Lime Rock, Conn., on May 30 and broke Porsche's domination of the under-two liter class in the Trans-American Championship Sedan Race series.

This was the fourth in the 11-race series, and Porsche 911s have heretofore swept the U-2 class. But not this time. Veteran driver and PCA member Peter Gregg of Jacksonville, Fla., winner of the U-2 class in both the Daytona and Sebring Trans-Am races, had a good lead on the Alfa at the beginning but the quicker car was soon leading the way. "We could out-drag him on the straight, but he got us in the corners," Gregg later told me. He had his share of troubles later in the 4-hour race with a flat tire and fuel-pump troubles. Gregg finished 5th in U-2.

### Porsche wins hillclimb in Spain, 1st of European series

The first in a series of races for the annual European Hillclimb Championship was won by Porsche in Monseny, Barcelona, May 21. The 2-liter German cars placed first and second overall in the Prototype class, and won both the Sports Car and Grand Touring Car classes.

First in the 2000-cc Prototype class was Gerhard Mitter, crack German driver who won the 1966 European Hillclimb Championship in a Porsche. Mitter, like the second-place driver, Rolf Stommelen, of Germany, drove a 2000-cc 8-cylinder Porsche. Third was Mario Casoni in a Ferrari. Rudi Lins, driving a Porsche Carrera 6, won the sports car category, and Malte Huth won the GT class in a Porsche 911S.

Second in the U-2 class was a Porsche 911 driven by 2 PCA'ers: Bert Everett of Doylestown, Pa., and Steve Smith, New York City. Smith also



PCA'er John Kelly caught this before it broke. At Mid-Ohio Trans-Am the Kelly/Bailey 911 was second in U-2 when a flat tire slowed them.



PCA'ers Bert Everett and Steve Smith ran strong behind the winning Alfa at Lime Rock (above); took third in U-2 behind 2 Alfas at the Mid-Ohio Trans-Am on June 11.

is Editor of *Car & Driver* magazine. They ran a smooth race and finished second in U-2, 6th overall.

Another PCA'er was Bruce Jennings who co-piloted Herb Wetason's Porsche 911.

Another PCA duo—John Kelly of Washington, DC, and Bob Bailey of Burnt Hills, NY, were down in the pack after starting 29 of 30 on the grid. Kelly split a wheel during a qualifying-consolation race and managed to limp around—safely—but almost missed. The fractured wheel was similar to the ill that beset Bill Bencker at Daytona during the 24-hour race. It was a rear wheel also, and paralleled Bencker's difficulty. Dick Goodman, Bailey's mechanic, ventured that the big Goodyear tires are really "sticking" and may be imposing severe stresses on the pressed-steel

wheels. Kelly/Bailey placed 3rd in U-2.

The 911 of Bill Bowman and John Pauly, who took first in U-2 in the 3rd Trans-American, went into the woods during the consolation race and severely damaged the entire rear suspension and engine.

Except for the winning Alfa, the others did nothing. Two were demolished during practice and the consolation race. The 3 remaining in the race pattered around in a bedraggled fashion.

The Fred Opert Valvoline 911 went out with mechanical troubles during the 4-hour race.

At the end of the 4th of the series, Porsche has 30 points and Alfa 22.

Overall winner of the race was Peter Revson in a Mercury Cougar.

—PRH

## Bob Holbert back in racing—as a sponsor

WARRINGTON, PA.—PCA'er Bob Holbert, one of America's all-time great road racing drivers, is returning to racing as a sponsor. Holbert, who retired from active competition in 1964, had a phenomenally successful career. Starting in 1952, Holbert earned much of his fame driving Porsches, although he was later to become a factory team driver for Carroll Shelby's Cobra racing cars. Holbert won virtually every National Championship he ever contested, several International victories, the *New York Times* "Driver of the Year" award in 1958, 1960 and 1961, and a similar award from *Sports Illustrated* in 1960.

Now 44, Holbert is a Porsche and Volkswagen dealer in Warrington, Pa. He is returning to racing with his first love—Porsche—not as a driver but as a sponsor. Holbert will campaign a 911-model

Porsche in the Sports Car Club of America's Trans-American sedan racing championship series.

"I just couldn't resist getting back into racing with Porsche," says Holbert, "even if I won't be doing the driving myself. I think the 911 is a sure-fire winner in its class, but what I'm really interested in is how it will do against the big cars."

Holbert expects to race the Porsche 911 in the remaining Trans-American events on the East Coast.

Driving the Porsche 911 will be PCA'er Bert Everett, Doylestown, Pa., a former SCCA Divisional Champion driving his own Porsche Speedster, and a veteran of last year's Trans-American circuit. Everett says, "Bob Holbert knows more about racing Porsches than anyone else I know. In the driver's seat or in the pits, he's a tough competitor."

Everett placed second in the under 2-liter class in the Trans-Am race held May 30, behind an Alfa GTA (see separate story on opposite page).

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Dear Bert + Virginia,

I hope you enjoyed your vacation. I spent an enjoyable time with Bob in Florida end of June at the Alfa Romeo convention.

I prepared this booklet for you. I hope you enjoy it, I still cannot find Bodroch Trans Am book, but included a copy of chapter on Bert.

Our best to you both.

Sincerely,  
Alex

AUTOWEEK - JAN 1, 1972



2 ALFA GTA's, SCCA approved for competition. 1972 2.5 Chall. One spare engine. Both cars will run at 9.2 lbs. per h.p. for '72. Represent best talents of Oscar Feldmann and Ron Neal. Also trailer and '69 Ford Club wagon and tow bus. Bert Everett, (215) 828-7250. Y