

DAN GURNEY AUTOMOBILIA

By: Pat O'Rourke



Pat O'Rourke is a lifelong Dan Gurney fan who has a passion for vintage road racing. He has been active on eBay for 25 years buying and selling vintage motorsports items under the username Pat4race, and along the way he's assembled an extensive collection of Dan Gurney memorabilia. During the 1990s he achieved a lifelong goal to race with a vintage Jabro Saab, and he still enjoys attending racing events such as the *Gurney/AAR Reunion* at Road America. Pat retired as chief financial officer of a large health organization in 2017 and now spends his spare time driving his Miata through back roads while visiting Virginia wineries. POrourke27@verizon.net

Displaying the 1:8 scale GMP Eagle Weslake with a TSM 1:43 Signature Series Eagle demonstrates the impressive 20" length.

A FOCUS ON GURNEY AND HIS "ALL AMERICAN RACERS" CLUB

Growing up in the 1960s, I discovered the collecting passion the same way as many others my age, with sports cards. Hoping to land a Mickey Mantle or Johnny Unitas card made me no different from my friends. However, I had one sports hero none of my friends shared: race driver Dan Gurney. When I was a youngster it seemed that he competed in every race series – even VWs at the *Nassau Speed Weeks*.

Dan Gurney was a living legend to me, with multiple wins in Formula 1, Indy Car, NASCAR, and the FIA World Championship, including 1967, when he won both *Le Mans*, with A.J. Foyt, and the *Belgian Grand Prix*, where he became the only American driver ever to win a Formula 1 race in a car of his own construction.

My Gurney collection started with cutting a coupon out of a magazine to order a note card with a Michael Turner image of Dan Gurney driving a Brabham at the 1963 *British Grand Prix* (an item I still own today). However, my collecting came to a halt in 1970, when the perfect storm of Dan's retirement from driving and my obtaining a driver's license of my own put all of my focus toward cars and gas money.

However, a trip in 1988 to the *Monterey Historic Automobile Races* rekindled my motorsports genes and my passion for vintage race cars. Several walks through the vendor village had me assessing my bags for what might fit on the flight home. But the real breakthrough came with my discovery of eBay in the mid-1990s. Basically, a vendor village infinitely bigger than *Monterey Automotive Week* was now a few clicks away, and my primary search from the beginning was for Dan Gurney items.

For 25 years now, eBay has been the primary source for my collection. When you are collecting items from someone with as diverse a career as Dan Gurney, there is no shortage of magazines, photos, artwork, diecasts, race programs, decals, patches, and more. Many are common items that are easy to locate, but as a collector you're always searching to find and acquire those rare or one-of-a-kind items.

One such piece is a GMP Real Art Replicas 1:8 scale model of the Eagle Weslake that Gurney drove to victory at the 1967 *Belgian Grand Prix*. I first saw one in 2005 at the *Monterey Historic Automobile Races* vendor village. Track security was likely alerted after I stared at it for 45 minutes, trying to figure out some way to afford the \$1,495 release price (made infinitely harder by the cost of attending *Monterey Automotive Week*). Through a combination of patience, creativity, and luck I had a "free" GMP Eagle by 2012. How, you may ask? In 2009 one was posted on eBay with a reasonable starting price, and two unique qualities a buyer loves; the listing description was poor, not including the scale or the manufacturer, and the photos weren't much better. With a nervous last-second bid I won the Eagle for about half the release price. This Eagle was an artist's proof version, which did not include the coveted Eagle display case.



AutoMobiliaResource.com

The author's "free" 1/8 scale GMP Eagle with a framed Keith Murray print of the 1967 Belgian Grand Prix winner.

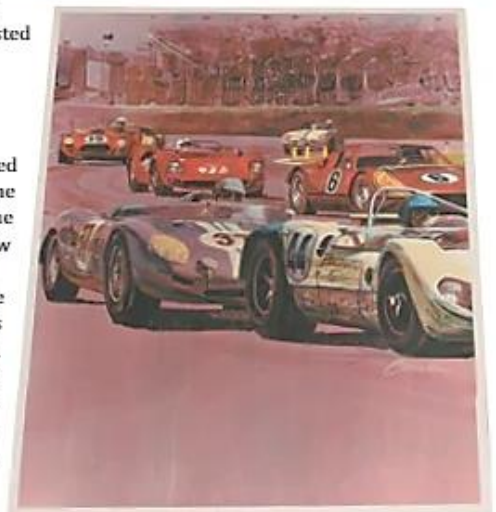
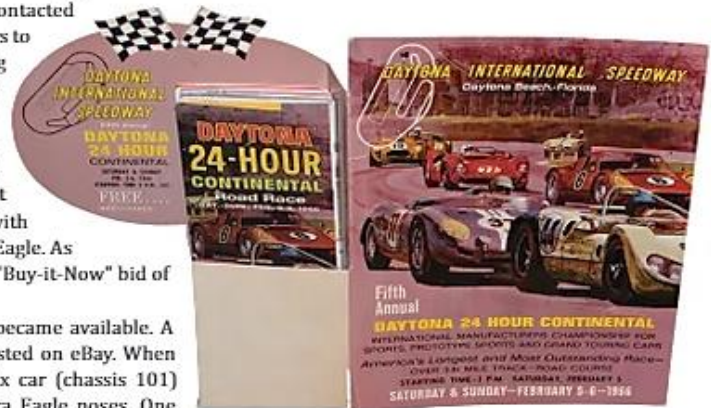


One of five fiberglass replica 1966 Gurney Eagle nose panels, commissioned during the restoration of the only Grand Prix Eagle Climax (chassis #101), with two Weslake V-12 pistons and a pewter replica of the 1967 Belgian Grand Prix-winning Eagle Weslake.

In 2012 I found one of the 250 production models with the display case on eBay. After a few days without any bidding activity, I contacted the seller and made an offer, which included driving 4 hours to pick it up to avoid the risk of damage in shipping. Acquiring the second one for about half the release price with the case was a great deal, but with it came the pressure to sell the first one. I posted my original Eagle on eBay with a description and photos similar to what Gooding & Company would use for a \$10 million Ferrari. In the end it sold for \$2,000, and after all the costs and fees associated with buying two and selling one, I ended up with my free GMP Eagle. As for the current value, one just recently sold on eBay for a "Buy-it-Now" bid of \$3,000.

Not long after my Eagle sale, a unique opportunity became available. A full-size fiberglass replica Grand Prix Eagle nose was posted on eBay. When Rich Griot was having his 1966 Eagle Climax grand prix car (chassis 101) restored, he commissioned the production of five replica Eagle noses. One went to Dan Gurney, one was retained by Griot, and the other three were given to the officers in his company. When one of his officers changed jobs, he posted his for sale. This piece is incredible, as it is painted with the proper dark blue 1966 Daytona 24-Hour Continental Race brochure holder and print of the original program cover artwork.

Shortly after winning the Eagle nose, I found some unused Eagle Weslake V-12 pistons posted on eBay. The seller in the United Kingdom stated that his father took over the Weslake engine factory, and these had been left behind. This resulted in a time-consuming attempt to verify that these pistons were actually from a Weslake V-12. Thankfully, a *Sports Car Graphic* magazine article with clear photos and information regarding their exact measurements confirmed they were a perfect match. I bought them all (5) and would estimate their values at \$100 each today.



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Race programs are an excellent collectible, as ones in excellent condition are typically available at a reasonable price. My collection includes the following from some of Dan's race wins or milestone races:

Year	Event	Current Value
1959	French Grand Prix*	\$75
1960	Nürburgring ADAC 1000 km	\$50
1962	Daytona Continental	\$100
1962	French Grand Prix**	\$75 - \$90
1964	French Grand Prix	\$70 - \$85
1967	Race of Champions	\$25
1967	Belgian Grand Prix	\$100
1967	Le Mans 24 Hours	\$125

*Gurney's first Formula 1 race.

**Gurney's first Formula 1 victory and the only Formula 1 victory for Porsche.

Numerous 35mm color slides and B&W photos are available of Dan Gurney, and they represent a great addition to any collection. I've included images here of photos and slides reflecting racing action, candid pit scenes, cockpit close-ups, and even a 1968 movie lobby card for *"The Wild Racers,"* featuring the 1967 Belgian Grand Prix-winning Eagle. Original B&W photos typically sell for \$25-\$75, depending on the car/event, while high-quality 35mm slides are now going for about \$60-\$125.

1967 "Go Gurney" pennant.



One of my favorite items is a 1967 "Go Gurney" felt pennant, with the AAR (All American Racers) Eagle logo and the right tip shaped like the eagle nose of the car. I've only seen two of them for sale in the past 25 years, but the current value would be \$75-\$100.

There are numerous AAR or Dan Gurney decals, stickers, bumper stickers, patches, and pin-back buttons. Some of my favorites are the 1967 water slide decal declaring "I support the American Eagle Formula One team"; a bumper sticker and pin-back campaign button from the 1964 *Car and Driver* Dan Gurney presidential campaign; and a Dan Gurney Eagle Racing Cars U.S.A. sticker intended for the sides or wing of a 1970s Eagle Indy car. The current value ranges between \$5 and \$25 (several are still available on the AllAmericanRacers.com website).

While campaigning Eagles in Formula 1, Dan Gurney and AAR formed an Eagle club with modest dues that were put toward support of the racing team. If you joined early you became a charter member and received a membership package of photos, patches, decals, and a periodic newsletter. I recently acquired the set shown in the photo for a purchase price of \$75.

Another source of photos and information is the press kits that racing teams prepare for distribution to media and journalists. I have press kits for the 1970 Plymouth Trans-Am Barracuda and 1974 Olsonite Eagle Indy car. Each includes several photos, press



Clockwise from top left: 1960 Nürburgring ADAC 1000 km; 1962 French Grand Prix; 1967 Brands Hatch Race of Champions; 1959 French Grand Prix; 1964 French Grand Prix; 1967 Belgian Grand Prix; 1967 Le Mans 24 Hours; 1962 Daytona Continental.



Dan Gurney Cards, clockwise from top left: 2014 Upper Deck Silver Anniversary and Silver Anniversary Signature cards; two 2014 Goodwin Champions Authentic Patch cards; Goodwin Champions Goudey card; Goodwin Champions common card; two Goodwin Champions autograph cards.

releases, and folders with team graphics. I would estimate that the rare 'Cuda Trans Am press kit is worth \$300-\$400, and the Olsonite Indy car kit about \$100.

In 2014, Gurney fans were treated to Upper Deck's release of Dan Gurney trading cards in two different sets: a Silver Anniversary set and a Goodwin Champions set. My collection includes an autographed Silver Anniversary card (limited edition of 25), two different Goodwin champions autographed cards, limited edition authentic patch cards, limited edition authentic jersey cards, and a few different common cards. The autograph cards sell for \$75-\$120 each, the patch cards for \$35-\$60, the jersey cards for \$10-\$30, and the common cards for \$5 or less.



These 1967 membership pack materials were received by new AAR Eagle Club members.

Two of the more unique items I have are technically not Dan Gurney items, but they prominently feature the Lotus 19 he drove at the *Daytona Continental FIA* race. The items are an original 1966 Daytona Continental race brochure holder and an 11"x14" print of the cover artwork from the 1966 Daytona program. The brochure holders were used at the Speedway and were provided to local businesses, and today they are extremely rare. Last year I sold a 1964 Daytona Continental 8.5"x11" promotional cardboard poster for \$345, so I would estimate the value of the brochure holder at \$500 and the cover art print at \$75.

Being the owner of an item with an official AAR chassis plate left me expecting an invitation to the 2022 AAR Eagle Reunion at Road America. Yet the invitation never showed up. I'm starting to believe it's because my chassis plate is attached to a book, not a car. Author John Zimmerman produced "*Dan Gurney's Eagle Racing Cars*" in 2007 that was released in a few different versions. While I own an autographed edition provided by Rolex to entrants of the 2008 *Rolex 24 Hours of Daytona* (where Gurney was the Grand Marshal), I couldn't resist an eBay auction for the very limited



The 2007 publisher's edition of the John Zimmermann "*Dan Gurney's Eagle Racing Cars*" book featuring a slipcover with an authentic AAR chassis plate, while the book cover simulated the nose of the 1967 Belgian Grand Prix-winning Eagle Weslake.

publisher's edition, which features the book cover simulating the 1967 Belgian Grand Prix Eagle livery, plus a dark blue slipcover with an official AAR chassis plate engraved with an individual serial number. The regular version of the book sells for \$140-\$165; the signed version goes for \$175-\$225, and the publisher's edition is \$400-\$500.

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Many collectible Gurney photos exist. Clockwise from left: 1967 *Belgian Grand Prix* Eagle Weslake (Eric della Faille photo); 1967 *Race of Champions* Eagle Weslake (Ted Walker photo); 1968 promotional lobby photo of the 1967 *Belgian Grand Prix* Eagle for "The Wild Racers" movie; 1960 *Nürburgring ADAC 1000 km Maserati T-61* (Yves Debraine photo); 1961 *Laguna Seca Pacific Grand Prix* Lotus 19 (Webb Canepa photo).



Clockwise from top left: 1962 *French Grand Prix* Porsche 904 (Michael Turner photo); 1967 *Ford Mk. IV Le Mans* (Geoff Goddard photo); 1965 *Sebring 12 Hours* Lotus 19 Ford (Andre Guichard photo); 1967 Olsonite Eagle promotional postcard; Dan Gurney reading a *Racing Pictorial* magazine at the 1962 *Daytona Continental*.



Slides, clockwise from top left: Gurney's first Formula 1 race at the 1959 *French Grand Prix*; In the cockpit of his Brabham during the 1965 *French Grand Prix*; cornering past a hay bale at the 1965 *French Grand Prix*; Eagle Climax at the 1966 *Dutch Grand Prix*; Pit Lane candid close-up at the 1965 *Indianapolis 500*; Eagle Weslake during the 1967 *Belgian Grand Prix*.

Current motorsports fans enjoy event photos that appear on the internet in real time. But fans in the 1960s generally had to endure a two-month wait for magazines to publish photo coverage of even the major races. The exceptions were the press photos that were sometimes transmitted by wire services like AP and UPI to newspaper and media outlets across the country for publication as soon as the following day. Other photos were taken by various photographers, some locally, and many are silver-gelatin prints. As newspapers and other print media have digitized their libraries, many vintage press photos have become available in the marketplace. These are



1970 Plymouth AAR Dan Gurney and Swede Savage 'Cuda SCCA Trans Am press kit.

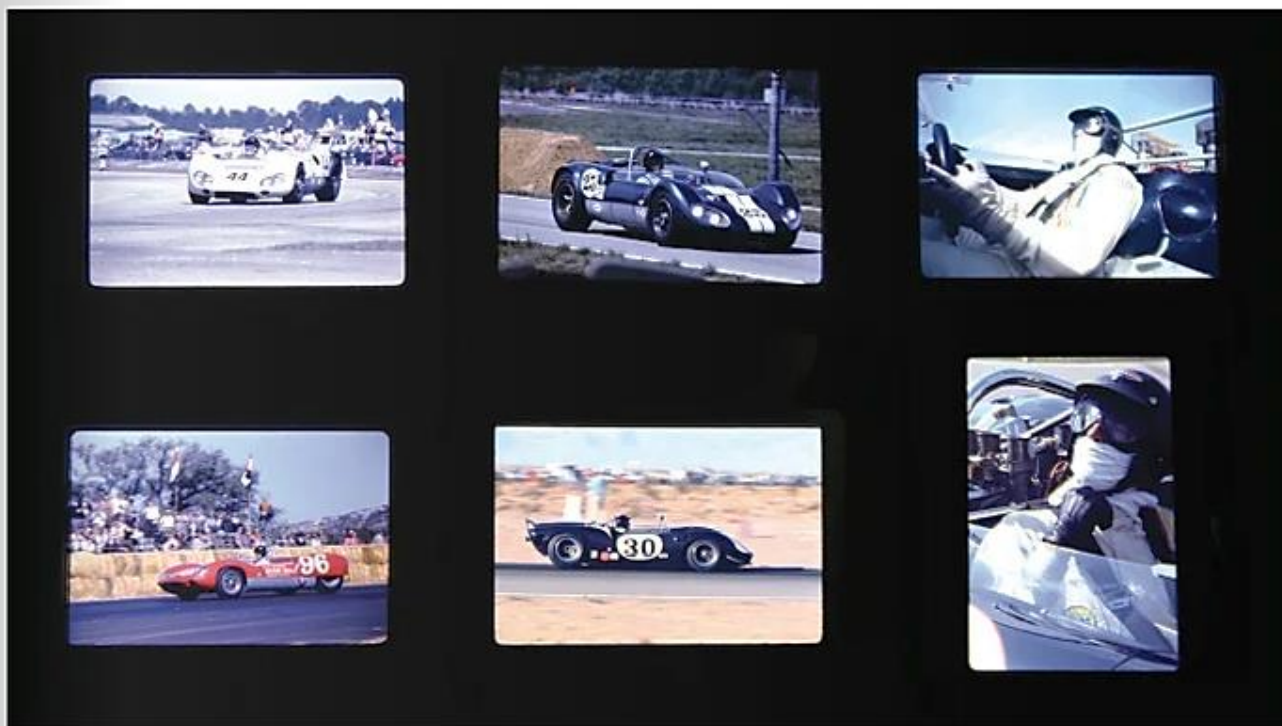
Left: 1974 Olsonite Eagle Bobby Unser Indy Car press kit.



typically 8"x10" glossy photos with some brief text included below the photo, and many have separate text on the backside with date stamps.

For Dan Gurney, the most prevalent photos are from major races such as the *Indy 500*, *Nassau Speed Weeks*, *Daytona Continental*, or *Riverside 500 NASCAR* races.

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Additional slides, clockwise from top left: Lotus 19 Ford at the 1965 *Daytona 24-Hour Continental*; Lotus 19 Ford at the 1965 *Sebring 12 Hours*; three images of the All American Racers (AAR) Lola from the 1967 *Riverside Times Grand Prix*; Lotus 19 at the 1961 *Pacific Grand Prix* at Laguna Seca.

★★ **DAN GURNEY** ★★
 CAR AND DRIVER CANDIDATE
FOR PRESIDENT



DAN GURNEY EAGLE RACING CARS U.S.A.

There are numerous AAR or Dan Gurney decals, stickers, bumper stickers, patches, and pin-back buttons. Current values range between \$5 and \$25. Several of these items may still be available on the AllAmericanRacers.com website.

created at AAR by Dan Gurney. He clearly appreciated his fans and enjoyed reliving the glory days of the past. His family and the AAR organization have followed in his footsteps with a respect and appreciation for those of us who remember and celebrate the talent, vision, and creativity of Dan Gurney.

The photographers shooting press photos usually had behind-the-scenes access, which offers collectors some images not generally shot by the motorsports press. [Editor's note: There is generally a very finite supply of actual press photos. Often, there were not many printed, and many have disappeared and been destroyed over the years. And... for some of the special images with great aesthetics, well... those often have premium pricing and can be extremely difficult to find regardless of price.]

Values on press photos are also condition-dependent, as many have editing marks used in the production of newspapers and other print media. Current values typically range from \$10-\$30, but many of the more special ones can run from \$40-\$100.

The important part of collecting is to find something you enjoy or are passionate about - something that provides a constant reminder of good times in the past. That's why I still collect Dan Gurney memorabilia, as every interaction I was fortunate enough to have with Dan, his family, Kathy Weida and the AAR staff, former AAR team members, and other Gurney fans shows the positive culture

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