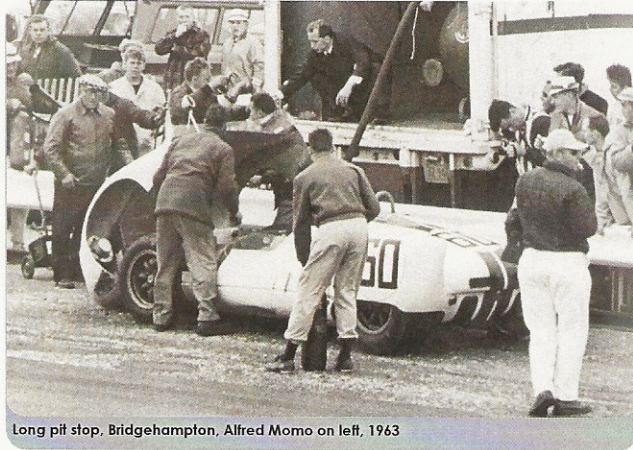




Laguna Seca Nationals, Bridgehampton, Dick Thompson, Cooper M--Maserati (62), Walt Hansgen CM/MKIII/Buick (60)

The car appeared at the Riverside Grand Prix on October 15th, 1962 in Cooper's traditional British Racing Green and white striping. McLaren had been right – the car was fast and he led the race until a water leak forced him to slow and take second. The winner was Jack Brabham in another Cooper Monaco.

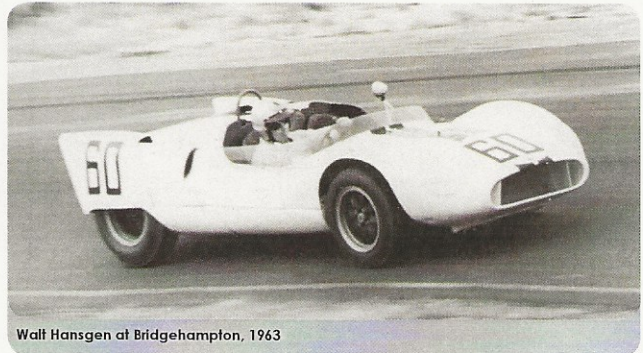
One week later, McLaren was at Laguna Seca for the Pacific Grand Prix and was quick again, but the motor was tired – and a piston seized in the race making him a DNF and leaving Moss to take the win in the UDT Lotus 19. At this point, the chassis was sold to Briggs Cunningham – and the motor was shipped to New Zealand to be used in McLaren's Tasman Series Cooper Formula car.



Long pit stop, Bridgehampton, Alfred Momo on left, 1963

Cunningham had the chassis shipped to Lance Reventlow's RAI shops in Los Angeles. Reventlow, heir to the Woolworth Stores fortune, had been running his successful SCARAB sports racers and had also created his own rear-engine machine, matched to a small block aluminum Buick motor. A similar 3.5 litre unit was installed in Cunningham's T-61M and the resulting car had more horsepower and weighed about 20 kilos less than with the Coventry-Climax motor.

The car's American racing debut came about at Virginia International Raceway, in April of 1962 where Team Cunningham driver Walt Hansgen was at the wheel. The rest of the season saw the Cooper-Buick one of the fastest cars in the "C-Modified" and "Formula Libre" events, including wins at Bridgehampton and Watkins Glen.



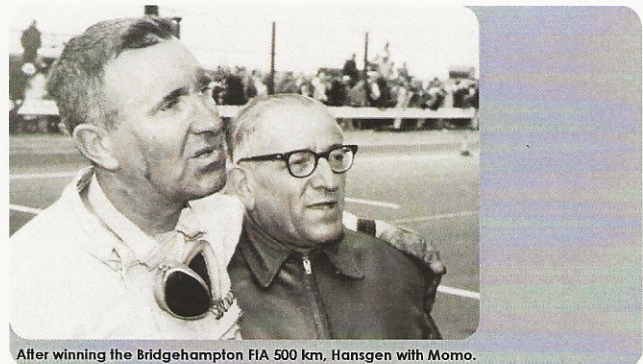
Walt Hansgen at Bridgehampton, 1963

For 1963, Walt continued his winning ways with the Cooper, including victories at Bridgehampton, Cumberland, Indianapolis Raceway Park and the final Team Cunningham 1st Overall at the second event held at Bridgehampton on September 15, 1963. The Cooper-Buick was then sold and went thru several owners until being repatriated to the U.K. in 2003 where it underwent a restoration by an ex-Cooper works mechanic and appeared at several vintage-racing events, including the Goodwood Festival of Speed.



Laguna Seca, 1962

The car is now owned and driven by Jeffrey Heller, Berkeley, California and appears at various West Coast vintage and classic events.



After winning the Bridgehampton FIA 500 km, Hansgen with Momo.

Credit for photos from the following books:

Cooper, by Doug Nye
Cunningham, by Richard Harmon
Bruce McLaren, by Ludrigsen

Bridgehampton Racing, by Finn
Walt Hansgen, by Argetsinger