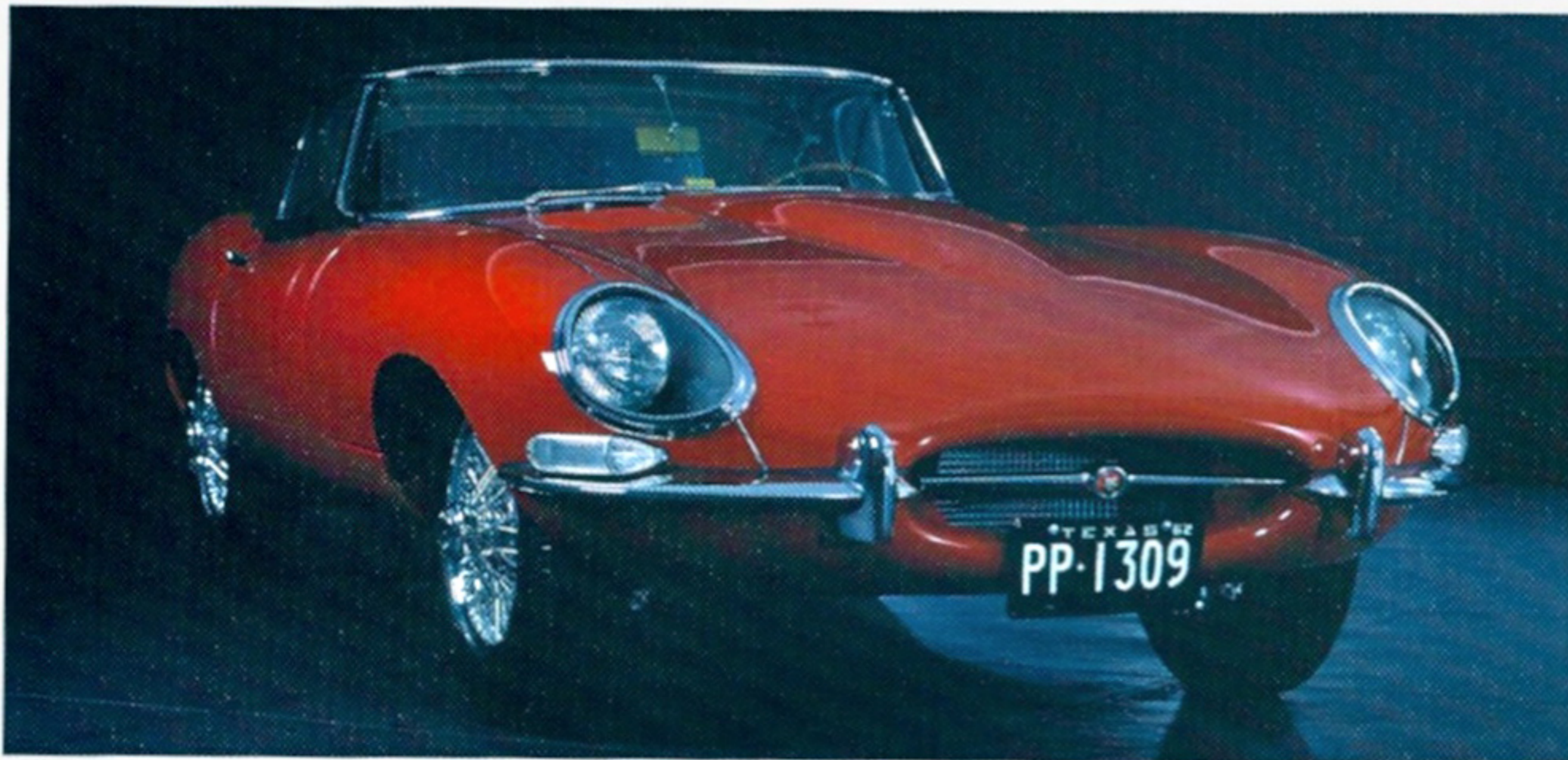


## Last-Minute Restoration – Challenge Champion!



**Above** This sensuous photo by Jim Tobak captures the essence of the E-type's unique styling. It's a look that attracts just as much attention today as over 40 years ago when Jeff Snyder's car was built. **Center** In Phoenix, Jeff Snyder received his trophy for first place in class from Bob Jack, representing Zymöl. **Below** This is a close-up of the Snyder Championship E-type on the show field in Phoenix during the 2003 Challenge Championship. A glimpse of the engine compartment confirms the attention paid to the most minute detail. The carved jaguar head was purchased in Mexico by a friend and goes perfectly with the competitive cat.

**Story** Mike Cook

**Photos** Jim Tobak and Mike Cook

Jeff Snyder had known the 1962 E-type for ten years... in fact he had painted it once in the mid-1990s. It was a long-running restoration project owned by long-time Jaguar Club of Austin member James Dahlgren. When James passed away suddenly in 2001, his family contacted Jeff about selling it, and he bought it himself. Thus began the story that led to winning the Sir William Lyons trophy at the 2003 JCNA Challenge Championship.

The E-type sat for a year under cover at Jeff's Resurrections, where he does high-

quality restorations of everything from American classic Lincolns to SS Jaguars. The inspiration to begin work on it struck around Thanksgiving 2002 with the goal of entering the 2003 Challenge Championship in Phoenix. That gave him five months for a ground-up restoration!

Despite the time factor, Jeff says that he "went totally nuts" on the restoration, right down to absolutely correct nuts, bolts, etc. All components are date-coded correctly to the car. He carefully preserved all factory pencil, rayon or chalk marks, where they appeared on various components. The boot mat, which is original, has the body number on it! He found an original,

hardly-used Dunlop spare.

Jeff and his crew are known for working best under pressure but some things eased the job. All numbers on the car matched. He was not starting from scratch but had been accumulating parts needed for the job. Built on October 16, 1961, it was a very early Series I car so finding the correct generator, regulator cover, etc. called for a search. The roadster had been converted to an alternator so had to be put back to original. Jeff says the job was "insane" but they pulled it off ... with a little help from their friends!

On Saturday, two weeks before the Challenge, members from the Austin club came over and devoted a day to working on the project so it could be completed. Jeff says, "It's the best illustration of JCNA spirit."

They finished the car on Thursday before the Sunday show in Phoenix. It was loaded into the trailer on Friday morning and Jeff got on a plane. On Sunday, the brilliant red roadster stood out amongst a group of very fine cars and earned the judges approval as the Best.

Jeff has been doing restorations for 10 years. He restored Mike Mueller's very early Series I E-type coupe, which is a consistent JCNA winner. The 3.8S class 9 champion owned by Wally and Elaine Davis of Austin, is his work. He has done 4-6 complete E-type restorations plus partial work on several others.

Personally, Jeff is an enthusiast with eclectic tastes. In his collection are a 1937 Harley-Davidson, a wooden Chris-Craft and some muscle cars. His next big project will be restoration of a Judkins-bodied V12 Lincoln with the goal of an invitation to Pebble Beach. He has done one Lincoln, which belonged to President Lyndon Johnson and also restored Lane Buschorn's gray SS drophead, which was shown at Pebble Beach in 2000.

The red E-type not only took the top award at the 2003 Challenge Championship, it won JCNA Class 5 with a perfect 100 average. Does that mean it will have a permanent spot in the Snyder garage? Not necessarily. Jeff is concerned about competing with his own customers and only entered the car in 2003 because he had no new E-type customers who were showing. He will probably not show the car again and has not yet decided how long to keep it. After all, there are always new projects to grab his interest!