



# THE OCTAGON

MARCH 1995

OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE MG CAR CLUB OF QUEENSLAND INC.  
 AFFILIATED WITH CONFEDERATION OF AUSTRALIAN MOTOR SPORT

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MG CAR CLUB OF QUEENSLAND INC.

# PROGRAMME OF EVENTS

DATE	EVENT	LOCATION	CONTACT	PHONE
<b>## Indicates Club Points will be awarded for this event.</b>				
<b>MARCH 1995</b>				
24th	Noggin & Natter	Clubrooms 7.30pm	Ray Edwards	341-7502
<b>##</b> 31st	Touring Assembly	Clubrooms 7.30pm	Phil Hutchison	355-2188
<b>APRIL 1995</b>				
14th-18th	National Meeting	Perth		
28th	Noggin & Natter	Clubrooms 7.30pm	Ray Edwards	341-7502
<b>MAY 1995</b>				
<b>##</b> 7th	Hillclimb	Mt Cotton	Joan Appleby	857-1561
<b>##</b> 26th	Touring Assembly	Clubrooms 7.30pm	Phil Hutchison	355-2188
<b>JUNE 1995</b>				
2nd - 4th	Aust Hillclimb Championships	Mt Cotton	Joan Appleby	857-1561
23rd	Noggin & Natter	Clubrooms 7.30pm	Ray Edwards	341-7502
<b>JULY 1995</b>				
<b>##</b> 2nd	Hillclimb	Mt Cotton	Joan Appleby	857-1561
<b>##</b> 7th	Touring Assembly	Clubrooms 7.30pm	Phil Hutchison	355-2188
28th	Noggin & Natter	Clubrooms 7.30pm	Ray Edwards	341-7502
<b>AUGUST 1995</b>				
<b>##</b> 18th	Ironman Touring Assembly	TBA	Phil Hutchison	355-2188
<b>##</b> 19th	Ironman Sprints	TBA	Joan Appleby	857-1561
<b>##</b> 19th	Ironman Motorkhana	TBA	Pauline Graham	200-8031
<b>##</b> 20th	Ironman Hillclimb	Mt Cotton	Joan Appleby	857-1561
25th	Noggin & Natter	Clubrooms 7.30pm	Ray Edwards	341-7502
<b>SEPTEMBER 1995</b>				
22nd	Noggin & Natter	Clubrooms 7.30pm	Ray Edwards	341-7502
<b>OCTOBER 1995</b>				
<b>##</b> 8th	Hillclimb	Mt Cotton	Joan Appleby	857-1561
<b>##</b> 27th	Touring Assembly	Clubrooms 7.30	Phil Hutchison	355-2188
<b>NOVEMBER 1995</b>				
24th	Noggin & Natter	Clubrooms 7.30	Ray Edwards	341-7502
<b>##</b> 26th	MGCC Race Meeting	Lakeside	Joan Appleby	857-1561
<b>DECEMBER 1995</b>				
<b>##</b> 3rd	Hillclimb	Mt Cotton	Joan Appleby	857-1561
<b>##</b> 8th	Touring Assembly	Clubrooms 7.30pm	Phil Hutchison	355-2188
<b>NOTES:</b>				
<b>1/. CLUBROOMS ARE OPEN FOURTH FRIDAY OF EACH MONTH FROM APPROX 8.00PM.</b>				
<b>2/. PLEASE NOTIFY PAUL STRANGE (3491400) OF ALL CHANGES, ADDITIONS &amp; DELETIONS TO PROGRAMME.</b>				
<b>3/. DATES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE. IT IS THE ENTRANTS RESPONSIBILITY TO CONFIRM EVENT DETAILS.</b>				
<b>4/. PLEASE SEE ALTERNATIVE LIST FOR NON MGCCQ EVENTS. CLUB POINTS WILL BE AWARDED FOR SELECTED INVITATIONAL EVENTS.</b>				

## FROM THE EDITORS DESK

I should be getting better and quicker at putting the magazine together but it does not seem to work that way.

It was pleasing to see our Club's involvement with the Miller Genuine Draft IndyCar Australia Classic Car Rally.

Joan Appleby's ZA Magnette and Peter Rayments TC looked more the part than the later model "Classics". Heard our Display in Australia Fair attracted a lot of interest for the Rally for 1996. Thanks to our members who were in involved in loaning their cars and setting up the display.



The next event on many of our member's minds is the National Meeting in Western Australia. Some I've heard are already packed, some have had problems like Peter Rayment having the B's rear rearranged, and others like me who will still work on the just in time principal. My daughter is half packed and crossing the days off her calendar. The joy's and simplicity of childhood. Brings back memories doesn't it.

More to do on the magazine. Bye for now. Thanks for the contributions, but the more the merrier.

David Robinson.

*The*  
**OCTAGON**  
Official Magazine of the M G Car Club of Queensland Inc.

THIS IS YOUR LAST ISSUE OF THE OCTAGON  
UNLESS YOU HAVE PAID YOUR 1995 MEMBERSHIP

M G Car Club of Queensland Inc.  
CAR  
MG  
CLUB

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# INVITATIONAL EVENTS AND ITEMS OF INTEREST

	DATE	EVENT	LOCATION	CONTACT	PHONE
<b>##</b>	<b>Indicates Club Points will be awarded for this event.</b>				
	<b>MARCH 1995</b>				
	19th	BSCC Motorkhana	Boondall Carpark Q	Paul Strange	349-1400
	19th	Bitumen Motorkhana	Marque Car Club	Carl Stecher	399 3638
	<b>APRIL 1995</b>				
	1st	SPARC Sprint	Lakeside	Sean Conway	395-1554
	2nd	2 Litre Championship	Oran Park		
	2nd	Economy Run	Marque Car Club	David Verna	377 8646
	9th	ATCC	Phillip Island		
	16th	Classic Rally	SE Queensland	BSCC	391-8881
	23rd	ATCC	Lakeside		
	30th	Hillclimb	Grafton		
	25th-30th	Targa Tasmania			
	<b>MAY 1995</b>				
<b>##</b>	1st	QMC 2	TBA	TBA	
	5th	Marque Car Club Night Run	SE Queensland	Alan Cunningham	
	7th	2 Litre Championships	Symmons Plains		
	13th	Supersprint	Marque Car Club	Robert Hawley	221 2250
	13th	2 Litre Championships	Calder Park		
<b>##</b>	14th	MacLeans Bridge Display	MacLeans Bridge	David Chambers	
	21st	ATCC	Winton		
	21st	BSCC Motorkhana	Boondall Carpark Q	Paul Strange	349-1400
	28th	ATCC	Eastern Creek		
	<b>JUNE 1995</b>				
	4th	2 Lite Championship	Mallalla		
	12th	SPARC Sprint	Lakeside	Sean Conway	395-1554
	18th	BSCC Motorkhana	Boondall Carpark Q	Paul Strange	349-1400
	18th ->	Round Australia Trial			
	23rd	Marque Car Club Night Run	SE Queensland	Phil Hart	812 3213
	26th	Classic Rally	SE Queensland	BSCC	391-8881
	<b>JULY 1995</b>				
	2nd	QMC 3	TBA	TBA	
	8th&9th	Qld Historic Race Meeting	Lakeside	HRRC - Bruce Richards	
	9th	ATCC	Mallala		
	16th	ATCC	Wanneroo		
	16th	BSCC Motorkhana	Boondall Carpark Q	Paul Strange	349-1400
	23rd	2 Litre Championship	Lakeside		
	30th	Grass Motorkhana	Marque Car Club	Carl Stecher	399 3638
	<b>AUGUST 1995</b>				
	6th	ATCC	Oran Park		
<b>##</b>	13th	QMC 4	TBA	TBA	
	13th	2 Litre Championship	Winton		
	18th ->	Australian Safari			
	20th	BSCC Motorkhana	Boondall Carpark Q	Paul Strange	349-1400
	26th	2 Litre Championship	Eastern Creek		
	27th	12 Hour Production Race			
	<b>SEPTEMBER 1995</b>				
	3rd	Classic Rally		Tony Galletly	225 4383
	3rd	Sandown 500			
	4th	Classic Rally	SE Queensland	BSCC	391-8881
<b>##</b>	10th	QMC 5	TBA	TBA	
<b>##</b>	17th	Concours	TBA	Carl Stecher	399 3638
	20th	BSCC Motorkhana	Boondall Carpark Q	Paul Strange	349-1400
	24th	Poker Run	Marque Car Club	Carl Stecher	399 3638
	<b>OCTOBER 1995</b>				
	1st	Tooheys 1000	Bathurst		
	15th	BSCC Motorkhana	Boondall Carpark Q	Paul Strange	349-1400
	21st	Team Sprint	Lakeside	Robert Hawley	221 2250
<b>##</b>	22nd	Interclub Motorkhana	TBA	TBA	
	29th	Classic Rally	SE Queensland	BSCC	391-8881
	<b>NOVEMBER 1995</b>				
	10th	Marque Car Club Night Run	SE Queensland	Tim Walters	015 128267
	12th	Australian Grand Prix	Adelaide		
	19th	BSCC Motorkhana	Boondall Carpark Q	Paul Strange	349-1400
	<b>DECEMBER 1995</b>				
	17th	BSCC Motorkhana	Boondall Carpark Q	Paul Strange	349-1400

Well, here we are six months into the Club's year and it only seems like yesterday that we formed the new Committee.

The Clubrooms are a shambles at present with the relocating of the furniture to fit in the compactus which will eventually hold all our library and so put an end to boxes of magazines lying all over the place.

The Race meeting (with so much needed rain) has come and gone and I thank everyone who helped to make this day as successful as it was. My thanks also to all those who helped with the Motor Show and made the presence of the Club felt. I am sure this helped to make our Race Meeting well attended. We have also had more spectators at the Hillclimbs so we have been coming to the forefront in Motor Sport.

Four days at Indy was a bit wearing especially the 6.00 a.m. starts to sign on and have breakfast. Good luck to those who ate it. The Indy cars were certainly worth watching but I think the noisiest ones were the Auscar Machines. It was great to see Steve Johnson have a win and a second place in his races. Other members of the Club who ran really did well but unfortunately I do not have any results to mention them all.

All the lucky ones in the Club are off to Perth for the National Meeting at Easter, some driving, some flying and some going on the train. Hope they all have a good time over there and come home with some of the trophies.

Australian Hill Climb Championships are coming up, and I appeal to those of you who will not be running to come to help with the running of the weekend. We will need people on points on Friday and Saturday from 12.00 noon and all day Sunday. Please help us to make this a most successful meeting. We would also be grateful if any members could give us the names of firms they think would be prepared to give us sponsorship.

The Special General Meeting to pass the balance sheet will be held on Wednesday 3rd May and I hope that you are interested enough to either attend or give someone your proxy.

May you all have a very Happy Easter and we'll see you at the next Hill Climb on 7th May.

Joan Appleby

## PRESIDENT REPORT



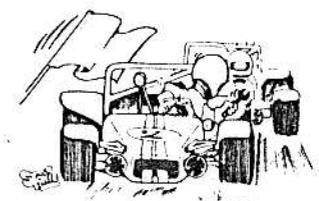
**"Otto Mechanic"**

By Jay Piersanti

# LEARN TO SPEAK FLAG MOTOR SPORT'S RAG TIME!



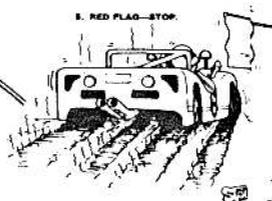
1. NATIONAL FLAG—RACE START.



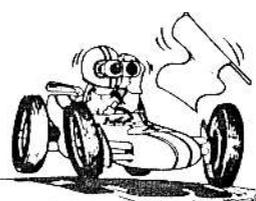
3. BLUE FLAG—CAR TRYING TO PASS.



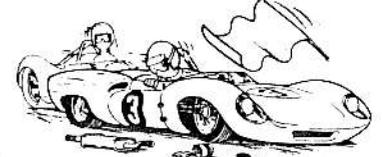
6. WHITE FLAG—SERVICE VEHICLE ON TRACK.



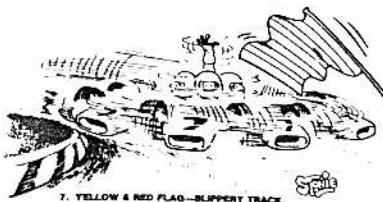
8. RED FLAG—STOP.



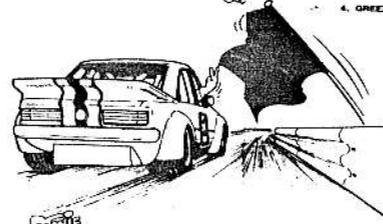
4. GREEN FLAG—TRACK CLEAR.



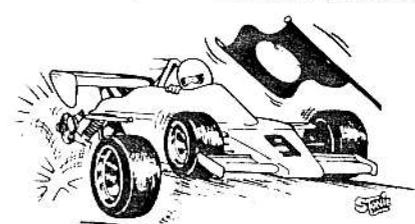
2. YELLOW FLAG—CAUTION (NO OVERTAKING).



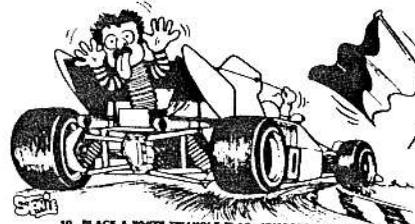
7. YELLOW & RED FLAG—SLIPPERY TRACK.



8. BLACK FLAG—CALL TO MTS.



9. BLACK & ORANGE CIRCLE FLAG—MECHANICAL DEFECT.



10. BLACK & WHITE TRIANGLE FLAG—UNSPORTING BEHAVIOUR.



11. CHEQUERED FLAG—RACE ENDS.



12. TEA BREAK FLAG—(WITH OR WITHOUT MARK).

CHEQUERED FLAG, MAY 1983

**SPINIE**  
©STONIE CARTOONS (ADELAIDE)

...YOU, LIKE EVERYONE ELSE, THINK THAT RACING IS OUT OF REACH OF YOUR POCKET... EVEN FORMULA 1 LET ALONE FORMULA 5000...WRONG! IMAGINE...

## ...FORMULA 5000 FOR THE HOME HANDYMAN...

MODERN MOTOR, June 1978

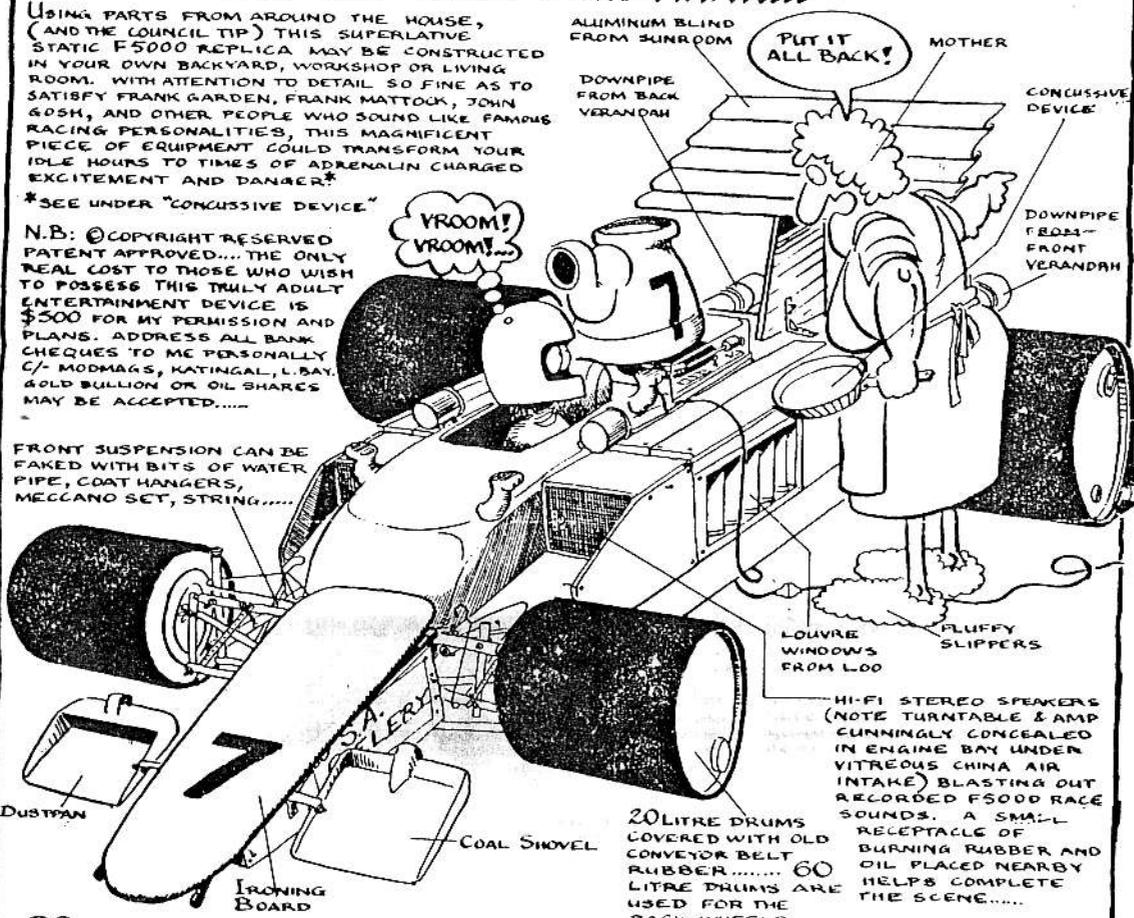
©BJJAKHURST, 1978.

USING PARTS FROM AROUND THE HOUSE, (AND THE COUNCIL TIP) THIS SUPERLATIVE STATIC F5000 REPLICA MAY BE CONSTRUCTED IN YOUR OWN BACKYARD, WORKSHOP OR LIVING ROOM. WITH ATTENTION TO DETAIL SO FINE AS TO SATISFY FRANK GARDEN, FRANK MATTOCK, JOHN GOSH, AND OTHER PEOPLE WHO SOUND LIKE FAMOUS RACING PERSONALITIES, THIS MAGNIFICENT PIECE OF EQUIPMENT COULD TRANSFORM YOUR IDLE HOURS TO TIMES OF ADRENALIN CHARGED EXCITEMENT AND DANGER.\*

\*SEE UNDER "CONCUSSIVE DEVICE"

N.B: ©COPYRIGHT RESERVED PATENT APPROVED... THE ONLY REAL COST TO THOSE WHO WISH TO POSSESS THIS TRULY ADULT ENTERTAINMENT DEVICE IS \$500 FOR MY PERMISSION AND PLANS. ADDRESS ALL BANK CHEQUES TO ME PERSONALLY C/- MODMAGS, KATINGAL, L.BAY. GOLD BULLION OR OIL SHARES MAY BE ACCEPTED.....

FRONT SUSPENSION CAN BE FAKED WITH BITS OF WATER PIPE, COAT HANGERS, MECCANO SET, STRING.....



ALUMINUM BLIND FROM SUNROOM

DOWNPIPE FROM BACK VERANDAH

PUT IT ALL BACK!

MOTHER

CONCUSSIVE DEVICE

DOWNPIPE FROM FRONT VERANDAH

VROOM! VROOM!

LOUVRE WINDOWS FROM LOO

FLUFFY SLIPPERS

HI-FI STEREO SPEAKERS (NOTE TURNABLE & AMP CUNNINGLY CONCEALED IN ENGINE BAY UNDER VITREOUS CHINA AIR INTAKE) BLASTING OUT RECORDED F5000 RACE SOUNDS. A SMALL RECEPTACLE OF BURNING RUBBER AND OIL PLACED NEARBY HELPS COMPLETE THE SCENE.....

20LITRE DRUMS COVERED WITH OLD CONVEYOR BELT RUBBER..... 60 LITRE DRUMS ARE USED FOR THE BACK WHEELS.

DUSTPAN

IRONING BOARD

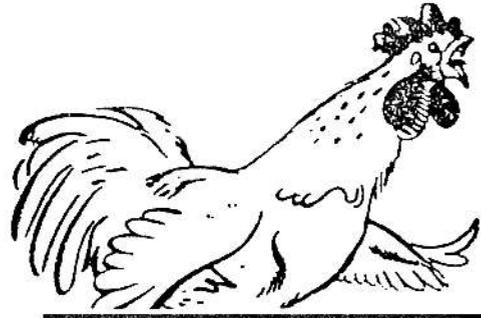
COAL SHOVEL

P.S: FOR THE PRACTICAL MINDED, A LATER ARTICLE WILL DEAL WITH THE PROBLEMS OF GETTING THIS MACHINE REGISTERED AS A TAXI.....

Couple of old cartoons supplied by one of our members! Times have changed but you could substitute INDY CAR for Formula 5000 and the CAMS Flags have had a couple of slight alterations since 1983. Spare a thought for the Flaggies at the recent INDY -one set of flag rules for each category racing (Indy Bob Jane's CAMS). Good

# LETTERS

GOT SOMETHING  
TO CROW ABOUT



WHERE ARE ALL YOUR LETTERS. THE EDITOR IS WAITING. SURELY YOU!! HAVE SOMETHING TO CROW/COMPLAIN/INFORM ABOUT. LETS HAVE YOUR VIEWS.

*(My apologies for not including this letter from Boycey. Gremlins must have hidden it away. Sorry about that. Ed.)*

## ANTICIPATION

Well although its still four days to take off. I'm feeling excited about our trip to Orlando, Florida to witness the most famous tin top race in the world - The Daytona 500.

I seem to be walking taller, smiling more often and singing out of tune as I get through the day.

My brain is always in overdrive as I recall many past experiences which are still indelibly etched in my mind.

Glen & I have trailed to many Motor Sport events over the years and it seems that the trip, the event and the experiences are all very important.

One such event, which I'm sure many Club Members will relate to, is when we first saw in action the Formula One cars at Adelaide - the breaking and acceleration was far above anything we had ever seen before. Speed at that level is truly exciting and thrilling.

Some twenty-one years ago in California our hosts took us to see the "Johnny Keys Memorial Race" at a small quarter mile speedway in San Jose. I can still picture the scene as we walked up the stairs to the grandstands. These winged monsters (modifieds) were hot lapping prior to the start of the meeting. Whilst the track was small with flat straights and banked corners it was filled with thirty modifieds on huge slicks running at what seemed to me impossible speeds. The ground and stands were shaking and our bodies trembled from the vibrations created by the deep throated exhausts.

Spin outs were rare but when a driver did "lose it" it seemed to me there was an unwritten law (perhaps it was a survival instinct) he immediately slammed on the "anchors" and stayed exactly where he spun. The corner would fill with tyre smoke but somehow the following field would miraculously split and go by the stranded car.

The competition was intense - out of sixty competitors only the bravest and fastest twenty-four competitors start in the feature. Needless to say the Feature Race was fast and thrilling with action all round the track. It was a night of racing I haven't forgotten and never will.

I could go on reminiscing but life is for living and there's lots of adventures ahead so I'm back to singing out of tune - "Something tells me I'm in for something good".

Boycey

*How about sending Sump Plug some gossip or sending some sort of Letter in for the other members interest. Just post it in to GPO Box 1847 Brisbane 4001 and you too can give your mates some stick. Ed.*

**Now listen**, what else do we need to make the IndyCar races a genuine alternative to the



Adelaide GP. We've got the cars (sort of), we've got the track (certainly), we've got the infrastructure (now), what's missing ????. I know...I know...I know...Adelaide has the Duttons Classic Car Rally, and we don't have anything like that. Well for goodness sake how did we miss that, get out there and buy one of those Rally things. By the way what's a Classic

Rally ??? Now come on guys, someone must know what a Classic Rally is and know where we can buy one. What do you mean ... nobody knows where to buy a Classic Rally...well use good management principles and find somebody who says they know what a Classic Car Rally is. OK Boss, there must be someone out there who knows what a Classic Car Rally is and where you buy them. We'll ask our publicity people.

You've come to the right place...of course we know what a Classic Car Rally is and we know where to buy one. Our company specialises in promotions and displays and we'll run the whole show. Just leave it to us, we'll handle it for you.

OK guys we've got the contract to run a Classic Car Rally. Does anyone know what a Classic Car Rally is and how we run one??? We've got much money from a company who wants to have this Rally thing called the Luigi Von Schnicklegrubber Indy Car Australia Classic Car Rally. Now what ??? Well lets give a decent first prize .... yes, yes.... a trip to the 1995 Indy 500 for 2 people, yes, yes... Hey boss a trip to the Gold Coast isn't that big a prize. Herman...you goose, the Indy 500 is held in Indianapolis, Indiana not Surfers Paradise, the prize is a trip to the USA. Sorry boss, I didn't know they raced these Indy Cars outside Australia. Alright Herman, you weren't to know, now what else do we need. G-strings boss, we've got to have G-strings. Herman you idiot, this is supposed to be a Classic Car Rally, how are we going to include G-strings in a Classic Car Rally??? Leave it to me boss, but we must have G-strings to have a successful event.

Well thats it then, we've got someone to pay the bills and we've found a way to include G-strings, is there anything, anything at all that we've missed. No, I think that's about it, lets run with what we've got!!! Thanks for the cup of tea Doris, I'll have one of those sticky buns today thanks... what's that, your nephew knew someone who had once competed in a Car Rally?? A church social run you say, well thats pretty close I guess...Doris, you'd better leave your tea urn for a couple of days and be our technical advisor on the Rally.

Whats that you say Doris, we need what ??? A root??? Sorry Doris, a route??? Wow, we're glad you're with us on this one Doris. Is there anything else we'd forgotten people, whats that Doris, competitors ??? We need what !!! Hey, I think we're getting the hang of this rally thingy....route, now competitors. Aren't we clever to have arranged all this rallying thingy???

OK guys, here we all are, the rally starts tomorrow morning, is there anything, anything at all that we've forgotten?? Rules, how we find a winner, social responsibility, safety .... no we'll wing those little items, but there is something that we've completely forgotten about. The girls will need at least one change of G-strings...now how could we have forgotten that!!!



Abingdon's last works racers reunited at Mallory Park. With them are, from left: former BMC works driver Alec Poole, HR&R's tester for the day, who drove RMO in '68 84hr Marathon; Tommy Wellman, BMC Comps Department foreman, who built cars; RMO's owner, Colin Percy, historic racer and collector. MBL's owner, David Collins, was abroad

## LIGHTWEIGHT TWINS

Two 200bhp, aluminium-bodied MGC GTs marked the BMC Competitions Department's sportscar racing swansong. Clive Richardson, who saw them built in 1967/68, reunites Abingdon's last and fastest MG racers.

Twenty-five years ago, as the autumn of 1967 turns to winter, the BMC Competitions Department's cramp workshop at the historic MG factory at Abingdon is full to bursting. The world's most famous and successful rally team has much on its plate. Priorities under the lattice of steel-girder roof supports are a clutch of Group 6, 120bhp Mini-Cooper S's and a single Group 5 BMC 1800 in final stages of preparation for the RAC Rally.

Over there, by the wood and glass offices of "Comps" Department supervisor Dougie Watts and foreman Tommy Wellman, the department's blue-overalled, Brylcreamed and moustachioed ace fabricator Nobby Hall is putting the final touches to the side exhaust on the wildest rally Austin-Healey 3000 ever. Registered PWB 57 after the initials of Peter Browning, BMC Competition manager and the owner from whom ex-works car has been temporarily requisitioned, then transformed, this mighty, 200bhp, alloy-engined forest racer is being readied for the RAC. Rauno Aaltonen's taming hands are scheduled to give the big Healey its last international performance, but the hard work will be in vain, for foot and mouth disease will force cancellation of what promised to be the most exciting RAC ever.

Scattered around the shop are Mini Cooper S's and a singleton 1800 "Landcrab" taking shape for January's Monte Carlo Rally, their interiors festooned with wire spaghetti as resident Lucas surgeon John Smith adds electrical arteries.

Ah, but what's this over here on axle stands: a British Racing Green in a sea of red and white? It looks like a racing MGB GT, but come loser. Look at those bulging wheelarchers. And, yes, that's torsion bar front suspension curly haired Johnny Evans is working on. Under the bonnet, nothing - just a gaping, red painted hole.

Across the yard at MG's legendary home, as Johnny begins work on the lightweight, aluminium-bodied MGC GTs - for that is what the BRG car is - for the Sebring 12 hour race next March, a new face has appeared in an office above the line where MGB's, recently launched MGC's, Midgets, Sprites, and big Healey's are assembled. That's me, a fresh-faced 20-year-old, the new assistant editor of Safety Fast, BMC's monthly sportscar magazine and journal of the MG Car Club and Austin-Healey Club. Wilson McComb, MG authority and manager in charge of the clubs and magazine, has just appointed me as assistant to editor Stuart Seager, a role occupied until earlier that year by comps manager

Browning, successor to Stuart Turner, who'd initiated the MGC project.

But I'm distracted. This young enthusiast has suddenly found Mecca, in the shape of the world-famous BMC Comps Department, just yards from my desk. I'm in and out of the departments shutter door most days watching progress occasionally in awe as I bump into heroes like Hopkirk, Makinem and Aaltonen.

I watch in particular that green MG, a lightweight, aluminium-bodied car described by mechanics Johnny Evan's build sheet (in front of me as I write) as an MGC GT "S", registered MBL 546E, as first it is stripped of the remainder of the mechanical gear with which it ran under MGB power in the 1967 Targa Floria. Then I see it metamorphosise into an MGC as that big lump of C-type seven-bearing, 3 litre six-cylinder engine is lowered into its red engine bay: the sore thumb paint is a relic of the shells original hue, rapidly changed after MGB engine fitment when Targa Floria organisers that cars must run in their national colours. Finally, Peter Browning and Competitions Press Officer Alan Zafer take me to Thruxton to see it tested with 200bhp C-power.

In March 1968, MBL leaves for the Sebring 12 hour race in

Florida, where it gains 10th outright (31 laps behind winners Elford and Neerspasch in a Porsche 907), first in the 2500 - 3000 cc Prototype Class and third overall in the Prototype Category. On its return, it's joined on the comps shop floor by an identical shell. Perched up there, under dusts sheets on top of Tommy Wellman's corner office, are four more bulging-arched, aluminium BRG shells. The new car is registered RMO699F and it - with a special all-alloy engine - and MBL are being prepared for Europe's longest race, the 84 hour Marathon de la Route on the old Nurburgring. Now,

on his build sheet, Johnny Evans has the model's type name correct:

MGC GTS. Gerald Wiffen's build sheet for the 1967 Targa, also in front of me, describes the then MGB as an "M.G. T.S.". Memories are misty now, but it is probable that "S" stood for "Special", not "Sebring" as most historians have it.

MBL, running almost as fast as the quicker 911's, will finish sixth overall and take a class win on the Marathon, loosing out on a top three placing after brake problems. RMO will retire, head gasket wilted. That will be our only race to-gether as official works entries. The following March, both cars will head for the Florida sunshine and the Sebring 12 hour after preparation by the Abingdon Comps Department, but by then they're owned and entered by British Leyland Motors Inc. RMO will finish strongly, 15th overall, MBL 34th.

A concise history of just four races, two of those down to MBL alone, including the Targa as an MGB, and MBL's Marathon and Sebring class wins their only seriously worthwhile results. But the pair's significance as the last - RMO the very last - and fastest Abingdon works MG racers, together with their charisma, engineering fascination and rarity transcends the paucity of their races and results. Today they are revered by MG enthusiasts everywhere, to many enthusiasts the ultimate post-war collectables.

Big Healey ace John Chatham built up the remaining four GTS bodyshells into complete cars, but their history doesn't concern us here: there are only two genuine

works-prepared and raced lightweight MGC GTS's and those are MBL 546E and RMO 699F.

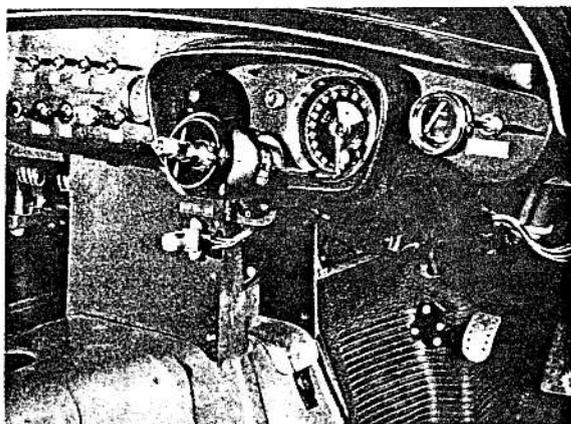
I don't remember when I last saw these two cars - shortly before they left together on that last trip to Sebring, I suppose, by which time I was based at Standard - Triumph in Coventry - and I never expected to see them again. Both remained in the States after the 12 hour race.

Now here I am at Mallory Park in October 1992 and those self same cars are in front of me, exactly as I remember them, for all the world as though I'm back in the late '60's. There's RMO with dayglo yellow nose treatment and yellow roof marker light and here's MBL with dayglo red nose and red roof marker light. And look who's here: it's Tommy Wellman, the very man who, as Comps Department foreman, supervised the building of the cars all those years ago. Though

He has driven up from Berkshire with Basil Wales, manager of BMC Special Tuning, next doot to Comps, when these MGC's were taking place. Basil, too, is little changed by time and here at his own request for a nostalgic reacquaintance with the two C's. Peter Browning, who has contributed his inside story of the racing MGC's to this article, was hoping to be here, but pressing business has intervened.

Over there is Peter Pan, casting a wistful eye over RMO, the very car he drove at the daunting Nurburgring in the 1968 Marathon de la Route: tall, still good-looking Alec Poole, now dare I whisper it, just adigit short of his half centry, is clad appropriately in Irish green overalls, and itching to get back behind the wheel of the car he really admired as a works driver.

Amongst all odds, the only



Familiar PR shot of MBL (above) issued pre-Marathon shows handling quirk in earlier Thruxton testing before '68 Sebring. HR&R's editor was there

RMO's interior takes shape in Comps, spring '68. Slippery drilled pedals replaced by rough faces later when drivers complained

retires the last 12 years after Comps closed in October, 1970 he ran two Abingdon production tracks, the Rectification before finding himself with no job at all when BL closed Abingdon completely). he's certainly not looking 25 years older.

two works MGC's ever built have survived - and survived intact. Most remarkable of all, MBL (MABEL to her friends) is totally restored, yet here at Mallory is fit enough for a track test by a contemporary works drive, 23 years since her last race. RMO is

virtually all original, but sensitively restored.

This is a very special occasion. Through the two cars were brought to-gether for a parade at Silverstone earlier this year, it is, to my knowledge the first time they've taken to the circuit to-gether in free-range action since Sebring and the first ever joint test by any magazine. Sharing the driving with Alec is RMO owner, experienced racer and MG collector Colin Percy. Colin is delighted to have helped bring both cars to-gether - and to be able to try MBL - particularly since he was racing abroad when RMO ran in the MG parade.

This time it is MBL's disappointed owner, David Collins, who has been forced by an overseas trip to miss the big reunion. David has generously agreed to loan "Mabel" in his absence and she has arrived in the care of Graham Pearce, MGC specialist - fanatic, even - who looks after her at his Midlands - based Bromsgrove MG centre.

Who better than to take us on a conducted tour of both cars that Tommy Wellman, the man in charge of building them? Tommy revels in it. "I've still got the special pliers at

**RMO's renovated interior (above). Seats re-trimmed with ribbed Triumph cloth as used by MG Trim Shop in '68. Smiths rev counters special for racers. Right: MBL's 1060 chassis plate on original red paint. Later car, RMO, has earlier 1059 chassis number**



home for those circlips on the Weber throttle linkages ... I remember making up those turrets for the telescopic rear dampers ... Those aren't our brake reservoirs on MBL - they must have been made up after Sebring ... We made up the brake balance bars, which are adjustable on the shafts ... Nobby Hall made up the first exhaust manifolds in the shop to get them running, then Downton made up the proper jobs." And, looking inside, "Those are the original leather straps for the spare wheels - I

made them up by a racehorse harness maker down the road in Lambourn."

We look at the chassis plates on the bonnet closure panels: ADO 52/1060 on MBL and the earlier number, ADO 52/1059, surprisingly, on the later car. Tommy points out original details in MBL's still red engine bay like the left hand engine mounting, underneath the manifold, covered with asbestos "to stop it melting in a 12 hour race," and the special 28 amp Dynamo, with large pulley, on positive earthed MBL, an item replaced by Colin Percy on RMO with an alternator and negative earth.

"Syd Enever's Development Department designed and developed these bodies. The pressings were made by Pressed Steel and then assembled on production steel floorpans, using rivets - you can see them showing through here on MBL's wings - bolts and Araldite, by the Castle Bromwich body plant."

For further weight saving, side windows are perspex and quarterlight frames are replicated in alloy.

RMO has a unique front-hinged bonnet. "We had problems with the bonnets coming open and flapping on their safety straps because of movement of the aluminium bodies. RMO was modified for Sebring in '69." This meant removal of the grill-mounted MG badge, which can't have made the US importer's publicist too happy. A report from pre-Marathon testing at Thruxton

shows another drawback of the light-weight body: "Fit safety catches on doors as body distorts." Simple, sliding cupboard catches remain on both cars.

MBL still has its original 24 gallon long-distance fuel tank under the rear floor. "We made them up by welding together two standard tanks."

Tommy was with the BMC Competitions Department from its inception to demise. "We worked under development at first, for Syd Enver and Alec Hounslow, with

Marcus Chambers as Competitions Manager. Then Comps was set up on its own, when the 'shop under Dougie Watts and me." In those early days, when competitions activities came under Development, Tommy had been drafted in from Service to work on rally Magnettes and TF's. In 1995 he worked on the Dick Jacob's MGAs for the tragic Le Mans race in which Dick almost died in an accident unconnected with the Levegh disaster.

He enjoyed racing just as much as rallying and usually went to all the long distance races, but was not down to look after the two MGC's on the 1968 Marathon de La Route. Then came a frantic phone call from Germany: the centre-lock wheel nuts were coming lose on the 60 spoke wire wheels fitted in place of the Minilites for the event.

"Syd Enever quickly designed a disc pressed over the nuts, which kept the nuts tight by centrifugal force. We made them up in the Comps from EN40" - Colin Percy emerges from the transporter with one of the actual nuts - "and I jumped on a plane to Dusseldorf with the modified nuts and five spare wheels." The modifications brought its own problems: "We could not get the nuts undone, so we welded a piece of scaffold tube to the big wheelspanner. That did the trick." Colin re-emerges with this historic Heath Robinson device and Tommy demonstrates it.

Minilite wheels had also had their problems on the MGC's, with cracked wheel centres necessitating a redesign.

Front discs on both cars are now solid and Colin was under the impression that this was because of problems with ventilated discs. On the contrary, Tommy explains: We ran solid discs to start with, but they distorted so much with the heat we had ventilated discs made up by Girling at about 180 pounds each, but we only had three pairs. The cars must have been put back on solids in the States."

Calipers are Girling three-pot, a rare Aston Martin variety at the back.

MBL had not handled well in MGB form on the Targa, so considerable work was put in hand to improve things for the MGC's, "though we never had time to do any

real development," rues Tommy. The two bodies had been cut away under the rear wings and turrents built into the rear quarters to accept adjustable competition shockabsorbers with 2in extensions. Radius arms were made up to fit the rear axle to stop the springs winding up - a mod apparently made for the Marathon - and an Austin Healey 3000 axle bracket added. MBL ran with a standard anti rol bar front and rear at Sebring 1968, but for the Marathon, the rear bar, according to Johnny Evan's build sheet, was changed to a "modified Mini-Cooper". By that he would had meant a competition Mini item. Front shockabsorbers were adjustable competition telescopics on standard brackets.

"Another thing we did to help the handling was to lower the front suspension by 7/8in by fitting new top arms; that lowered the roll centre" recalls Tommy Wellman, precisely.

In spite of all the work, the drivers plenty to complain about in tests of both cars at Thruxton on July 25 (Hopkirk/Aaltonen) and August 2 (Hedges/Baker/Enever/Fall) 1968. "Too much oversteer". "tpoo much understeer". "axle tramp on braking". "handling changes from understeer to oversteer - lifts inside wheel too much" (this on RMO running with 60lb lighter all-alloy engine). "brakes on red car better than yellow car." Tommy's boys must have worked diligently, for towards the end of the second session, MBL's reports "handling excellant" - RMO still coming in for some stick, however: "lifts inside rear wheel; sloppy at the front; oversteering badly; suspension too soft". Alec Poole report elsewhere in this feature that TMO's behaviour had changed considerably for the better by the time the car arrived at Nurbrugring.

Tommy puts to rest some of the misinformation about the prototype alloy engines built for these MGC's and for the '67 RAC Rally Big Healy (that engine subsequently went into John Gott's racing Healy). "We only ever ran one once in the C's and that was RMO in the '68 Marathon." John Chatham has one of the engines in his own lightweight MGC racer.

On all occassions, both cars ran iron blocks with alloy heads. MBL's engine, so far as known, has

never been touched since Sebring, apart from routine servicing. Should anything happen to it. David Collins is in the happy position of owning a brand new spare alloy-headed engine, still in its packing case, which has accomplished the car since Sebring.

Colin Percy would give an eye-teeth for what's in that packaging case. RMO's engine dropped a valve at Silverstone when a guide shifted in the alloy head. The head was repaired, but proved porous and unusable. No spares are available, so a modified iron head - 20lb heavier - has taken its place.

So, how much power did these cars - always quoted at around 200 - 202bhp at the flywheel at 6000rpm -

**Tommy Wellman,**  
Abingdon Comps  
Department  
foreman who built  
cars, demos  
'scaffold tube'  
wheel spanner  
from 1968  
Marathon race



really give? "Well, the most we saw on the rolling road was 187bhp at the wheels, and you can reckon on a 10 to 15 per cent loss at the rollers," recalls Tommy. "We built the engines for reliability, not outright performance - we could have got a lot more power with more development."

A weighbridge ticket from July 1968 showed that MBL turned the scales at exactly 22cwt when weighed in Marathon trim, ready to roll, compared a dry weight of 23.2cwt for a standard MGC GT. The two cars were said to be good for 153mph on the highest available final drive ratios.

The ultra-reliable iron-block and the never fully proven alloy engines were built with nitrided cranks, balanced in unit with lightened flywheels (alloy on the alloy engine) and Lockhead competition

clutches, and special steel crankshafts and camshaft gears. Oversize (+0.40in) competition pistons gave a capacity of 2.968cc. Conrods were balanced standard items. MBL's first engine, for Sebring, ran a 539 cam; subsequent engines had a later type 736 cam. Johnny Evan's build sheet for MBL pre-Sebring notes "compression ratio 9.85:1 when arrived in comps, 0.02 removed to bring up to 10.25:1", the ratio used on all subsequent engines. The alloy heads, built by Engines Branch, were gasflowed, polished and fitted with Nimonic 80 valves and special bronze valve guides. Rocker assemblies were modified and cracked tested. Triple 45DCOE Webers and Downton exhaust manifolds completed the story.

RMO ran at Sebring with a competition Laycock overdrive - operated by a gearbox flickswitch - fitted to its fourspeed gearbox. MBL without. Colin Percy has since dispensed with overdrive and rebuilt the close ratio, spur cut competition gears into a non-overdrive casing: "It kept slipping whenever it got hot." Testing records from before the '68 Marathon, in which both cars ran with overdrive, showed that the trouble was not new. Sorted in testing, the units started to slip again in practice at the 'Ring but, as Alec Poole relates in his story, another cure was preformed.

Tommy and I stood in the Mollory pits reflecting on what might had been as Alec and Colin went out to play (because of time I managed only part of a lap returning MBL from photography). It's all a question of "if only": if only there'd been more time for development; if only we could have done more events. Thanks to Lord Stokes, the MGC GT's were cut off before their prime. I doubt very much, with benefit if hindsight, whether those flexible alloy bodies would had withstood the rigours of the rallying programe promised by Peter Browning in the press release of 1968 season.

It is nice to think, though, that Abingdon might had had a 240Z beater three years before its time. #

*(Thanks to John Crane for this article supplied on disc. Ed..)*

Have you seen the new wiz-bang open and shut filing cupboard called a compactus in the club rooms. Just stuff all the good gear in and squeeze it shut and wow! its all neat and tidy and had disappeared. Might just get the library of magazines in order. Good stuff fellows on the committee.

Just ask Joan (our President) about getting the photocopier repaired. A "loverley" tale of patience. Thanks Joan from all for printing our last magazine.

Did you ever hear the rumour that Linden Cooper fancies himself in a Nascar or Auscar. Talk about the helmet strap being too tight.

Seems that committe member Steve Austin had entered the Farrell for the March Hillclimb and Tony Jewels thought that it was his event but seems he was off on the Indy Rally that started in Sydney the same weekend. Was some comment about having the main competition removed. Steve was the pace car for the Auscars at Indy. Said something about the Falcon running out of brakes in a couple of laps. Once a pacer now a racer. Is that how it goes????

Talking about "pacers" did you get a load of the editorial in the Redland Times "On the Road" section by Chris Whitehead. Complete with photo of "WHO IS THAT COOL DUDE" (Steve) and the Mercedes Pace Car and words of wisdom. Oh if Sump Plug had the talent of a newspaper writer!!!! Now where did the Auscar Falcon Pace Car go that Steve drove.

Did you here about "El Presidenta" running true to country of origin of title. Was seen at Siesta time lying on the floor under the timing tables at Indy on Thursday Practice. Now where did Joan and company go on Wednesday???

John Kingcott was on his see-food diet at Indy. He saw extra lunch packs and packed them as well as his own. Even packed Ray Edward's as well.. Boy, he must have been hungry the day before. Because the Indy lunch packs were not startling good. Ray reckoned his was in John's esky to keep it cool. The boys were on the same flag point along with Martin Jenkins.

Brad Stratton - part time racer and doctor car driver at Indy - was again inseparable from his camera with the biggg!!! lense. Ask to see his photos and it was said he was getting old, mellowing and slowing down.

Who was the Porsche Owner/Driver and Triumph Owner/Driver seen wandering the streets of Surfer Paradise late at night in search of some entertainment?????

Senior District Fire Officer most times seen checking out the talent at Hillclimbs in between runs. He was seen recently on the TV Drama set of "Fire" doing what he does best - Standing around checking a "Fireman called Georgie." Way to go John!!!

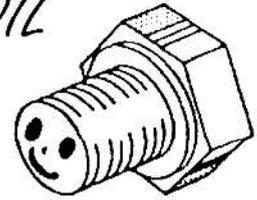
Congratulations to all our members that competed in the Miller's Indy Grand Prix Rally,

Heard the timekeepers took Ann away to Indy for the 5 days and she was most friendly, affable and the "Ann of old". Maybe she should have more weekends away. Must enjoy people company.

Talk about a small world. It appears that the Chief American Timekeeper - Barbara Funk - belongs to her local MG Car Club in America. Even knew what a MG Magnette Sedan was. Now there must be a story in there somewhere between Joan Appleby and Barbara.

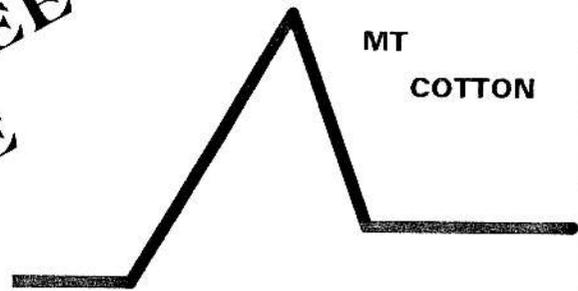
*How about sending Sump Plug some gossip. Just post it in to GPO Box 1847 Brisbane 4001 and you too can give your mates some stick. Ed.*

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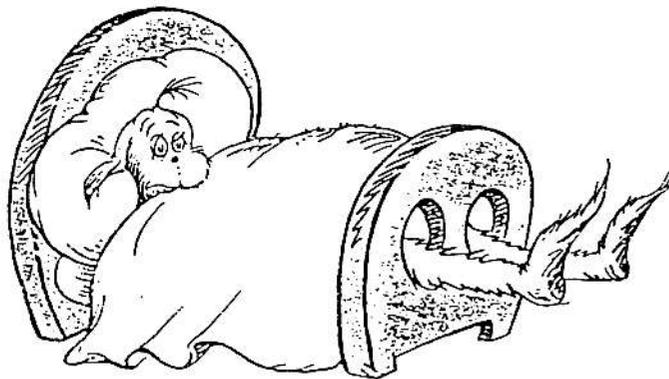
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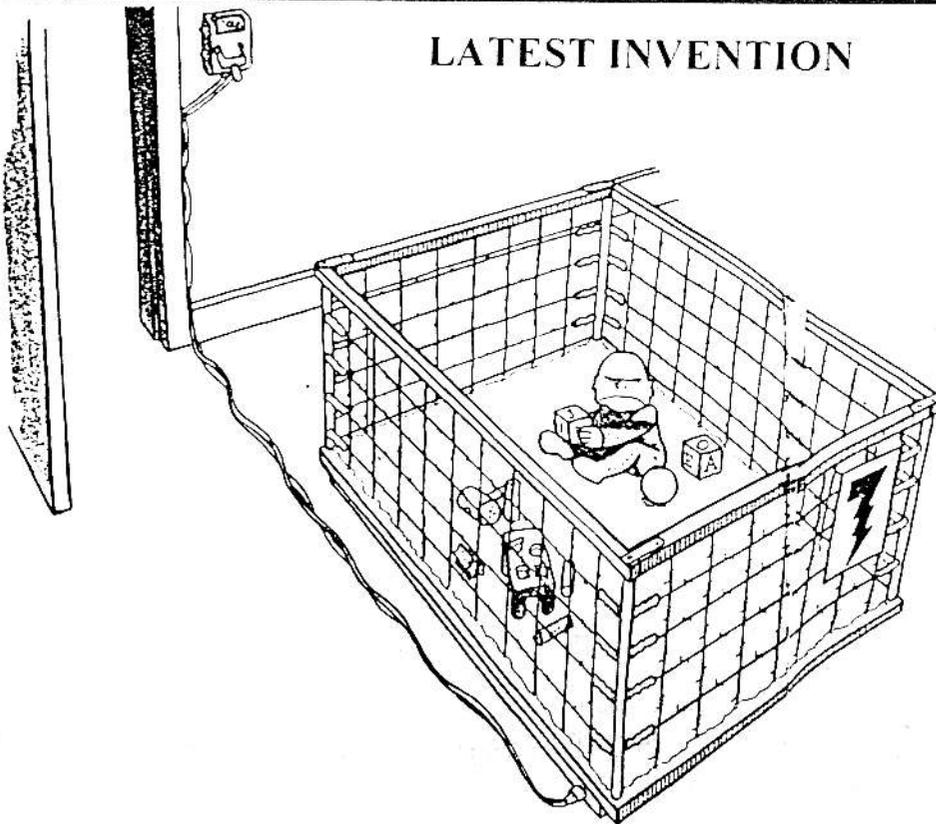
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**LATEST INVENTION**



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COOPER'S FOR YOUNG SON HAYDEN.**

# MILLER DRAFT INDY CAR CLASSIC CAR RALLY

The Rally began in Sydney on Saturday 11th March and finished at Surfer Paradise on Thursday 16th

the first day of the Indy Carnival.

On Monday 13th Ray Edwards and I in his MGB, together with John and Helen Kingcott in their MGB joined the Rally at Surfers Paradise. We left soon after for a scenic drive to the ultimate destination Toowoomba. The navigation skills required were not too arduous using the maps provided by the organizers.

A grass Motorkhana was held in Toowoomba where

Ray and John acquitted themselves well coming 4th and 5th respectively. It was then back to Brisbane for us after a long day commencing at 6.00 am and finishing at 10.00 pm but thoroughly enjoyable.

Wednesday with John Walker involved a trip to MG Car Club's to Mt Cotton Hillclimb and the Driver Training Centre next door for the motorkhanas. The Skid Pan was interesting and all drivers trying

hard. John Walker had the honour of spinning not once, not twice, but three times crossing the finishing line backwards much to the delight of the other competitors and spectators. This was actually broadcast on national television SBS Speedweek.

Each Competitor at the hillclimb had two runs with the fastest time to count. There were no momentas ant all drivers completed the hill safely.

Thursday we journeyed to Lakeside for fast laps - from a standing start as well acceleration and salom courses. Following completiton of all thers activities the competiton ended at



**BOBBY RAHL PRESENTING CLASS WINNER TROPHY**

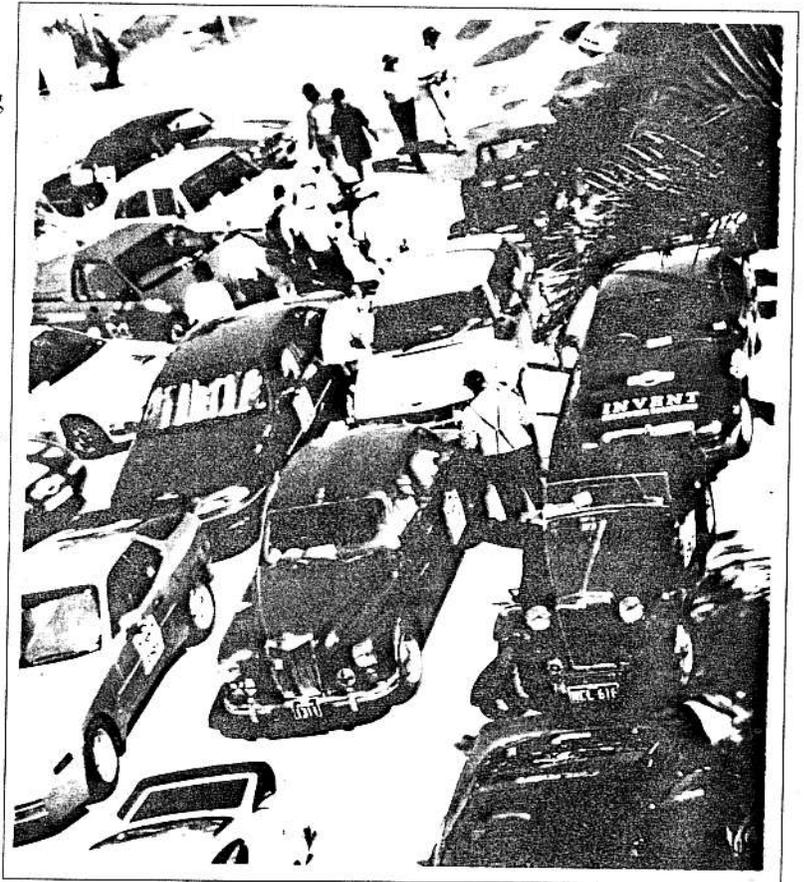


Surfers Paradise with a Treasure hunt along the way. Finding a policeman's hat proved a little difficult for us.

My overriding impression of the Indy Car Classic Rally is that it is an excellent idea as it brings together people with common interests to experience the joys of rallying.

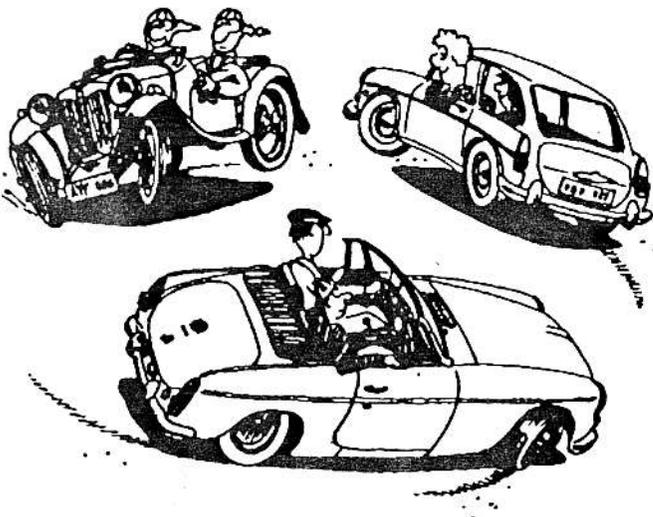
It is inevitable that with the first of any new venture there are going to be a few bugs to be ironed out. All in all though, I think the organisers did a good job with the constraints imposed on them throughout the event.

We hope to see you there next year as several of our members were class winners and are looking forward to 1996.



## 1995 NIGHT TOURING ASSEMBLY

26th May 1995



**MORE INFORMATION:** Phil Hutchison 355 2188  
Before 8.00 pm

**7th MAY  
1995**



**MT COTTON  
HILLCLIMB**

HILLCLIMB CIRCUIT  
GRAMZOW ROAD  
MT COTTON

*ACTION STARTS  
9.30 AM*

## NEW MEMBERS WELCOME

*We would like to welcome these new members to our Club and hope they enjoy the Club and the company of their fellow members as much as our current members.*

Peter Collins	MG TF	Christopher Curtis	MG ZA
Marilyn Bos	Jaguar XJ6	Philip Bos	Jaguar XJ6
Rick Fabri		Jacob Stecher	AH Sprite/Midget
Chris Wylie	Ford Laser	Thomas Coulstock	Van Dieman F/F
Nicole Conroy	MGB	Andrew Larsen	Nissan 1000
Darren Palmer		Jeffrey Gill	Toyota GT4 Celica
Reginal Foden	Jaguar Sovereign	Tony Horstman	AH Sprite Mk111
Martin Milner	Morgan 4+4	Paul Davy	Mazda RX7
Ronald Mankey	Mazda RX7	Philp Judd	
Richard Percival	VR Commodore	Kevin Brown	Torana
Peter Goodbun	VR Commodore	John Waters	
Noel Tesch		Mary Wallace	
Ian Barberie	Ford Serria Cosworth	Stephen Pratt	Subaru
Gayle Catlin	VR Holden GTS	Bryan Blease	VR Holden GTS
Stuart Douglas	Toyota Corolla	David Brown	MGB Mk1
Peter Rogers		Craig Newton	Mazda RX7
Jill Plummer	MGA	Justin Plummer	MGA

*(Ed. Sorry for those persons who where ommitted from our last magazine.)*

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  3. Rostyle hub centres with MG Logos.
  4. Leather seats or kit (Black)
  5. Steering lock with switch
  6. Lift Jack (side) type
  7. Tonneau cover black
- Phone Ian Clifford  
881 3530 or 018 151213

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## READERS' TECHTIPS

Do you have any helpful hints then write to the Editor



Chalk soon identifies buckled rim; tighten spokes to cure

## CHEAP FRONT-END FIX

I was lucky enough to be lent a TC for the MG day at Silverstone. The car had just been fully restored and ran gloriously, with the exception that the steering needed constant corrections to keep the front wheels from brushing the kerb or pounding the catseyes. Drivers following me must have thought I'd had a skinful.

The TC's owner had changed the kingpins and adjusted the steering box, and then run out of ideas to fix this dangerous phenomenon. It flummoxed me to begin with, too. With the wheels jacked off the ground, I got a friend to shake the steering wheel from side to side while I felt for excessive play. Everything checked out.

The answer, or at least part of it, dawned when we gave the wires a spin: even with the naked eye it was clear they were running out of true. To

confirm it, I held a piece of chalk just away from the rim and turned the wheel. It was soon obvious where the high spots were. Fixing it took only a tightening of the spokes to pull the rims back into line.

The TC's behaviour was transformed, although then it pulled very gently to one side - hardly surprising when I found that one front tyre was overinflated by 5psi while the other was down 10psi.

And the moral of the story? Before you spend loads on a front-end rebuild, it's worth a few simple checks to pinpoint exactly what's wrong.

First inflate the tyres to the recommended pressures then check the front wheel bearings as per your workshop manual. Too loose and the wheels will wobble, too tight and the bearing may overheat and collapse. With the wheels jacked clear of

the ground, move the wheel up and down and look for play in the kingpins. Any slight play may come out with a few pumps of grease. As you can imagine, if there's any movement in the pin there's no point in getting the camber, castor or kingpin inclination adjusted until you've fixed the fundamental problem.

The same applies to the balljoints (tie rod ends). If they're worn to the extent where they lift or knock when the steering wheel is shaken, you'll get false readings on the steering geometry machine. Don't think for one minute that the spotty grebe at your local tyre fitting depot will check for these things - he's not trained or interested in working on older cars. Wheels should run to within 1/8in out of true at the rim, and be balanced to stop shimmying at speed.

A worn shock absorber will also make your car wander as well as increase tyre wear and braking distance. If the shock absorber is oil-filled, check and top up with the correct grade lubricant (Penrite Oils stocks it) or, if you have the more modern gas shockers, bounce each corner of the car and make sure the body rises and settles in one movement. If it bounces more, you need new shockers. And don't forget, always replace them in pairs.

Watch out for broken coil or leaf springs; you can replace them, or have them retempered, if they are weak or sagging. Then you can tighten up the U bolts where necessary before you finally adjust the steering box. It's important to make sure that the box is free at all points and the meshing is spot on. All cars vary slightly so you must refer to the workshop manual for precise adjustments.

When you're happy with all these points, entrust your car to a tracking specialist with state of the art, four-wheel-adjusting equipment who can set toe-in, camber, castor and kingpin inclination.

Get all this right and your car will go around corners like a roller coaster and when you lighten your grip, the steering wheel will centralise as easily as any modern car's.

To pinpoint the location of a blowing exhaust, hold a rag over the end of the pipe and listen for the hiss from the split or hole. If the system is sound the engine will stall. Tighten clamps or weld to fix.

Keep your tyres in tip top condition and prevent punctures by digging the stones out of the grooves with a penknife or small screwdriver every month.

Prevent scratches on your windscreen by periodically cleaning your wiper blades with warm water to remove small particles of dirt and keep the blades nice and supple with a smear of nothing more exotic than hand cream lotion.

When you strip down a mechanical component, make drawings or take photos as you go to make reassembly easier.

Don't throw a damaged panel away - it's a useful source of metal for repair panels.

A squirt of washing up liquid or hand cleaner will help you replace rubber bushes. Do not use grease or oil since these products can cause the rubber to perish.

Delicate parts can be cleaned with an old toothbrush: toothpaste is a cheap, mild abrasive.