

Competition in the Triumph "TR2" 1956

The purchase of the "TR2" heralded a renewed bout of participation in a wide range of motor sport activity beginning only a few weeks later. My immediately previous event had been in a sprint meeting at Strathpine organised by the MG Car Club on February 25th, 1956 where I had driven my MG "TF" 1250. The MG Car Club usually called them "Sprints" while the Toowoomba Auto Club used the term "Speed Trials".



At the Burleigh Heads hillclimb, April 22, 1956

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This hill climb was held on a road behind Burleigh Heads and was organised by the Pacific Car Club. It was programmed as "The Second Burleigh Hill Climb. The road surface was gravel and the course, which could have been Tabilban Street, ran from a spot just off the road leading to West Burleigh and finished near the reservoir at the top of the hill.

The fastest time of the day of 46.2 seconds was naturally enough in the Racing Car category. The car was a Cooper-JAP driven by Bill Pitt. Bill was a regular driver of the Jaguar "D" Type raced, and sometimes driven, by Mrs. Geordie Anderson. In the 1200-1500 cc Sports Car Class the times were: W. Weekes MG "TF" 50.0 seconds, V. Jordan MG "TF" 52.5 seconds, J. Poteri MG "TF" (Jim had purchased my old car) 55.1 seconds, E.G. Jones MG "TD" 55.6 seconds, R E C C Roberts MG "TF" 57.5 seconds.

In the 1500-2000 cc. Sports Car Class the times were:

G. Llewellyn Triumph "TR2" (fastest Sports Car) 49.7 seconds, B. Minogue Triumph "TR2" 52.4 seconds, K. Ebeling Triumph "TR2" 52.5 seconds.

Another Triumph "TR2" driven by J. Bertram ran in the Racing Car Class. His time was 50.2 seconds. The only Austin Healey 100, driven by F. A. Gourley, made a best run of 51.6 seconds.

The oldest car present was a Vauxhall 23.60 driven up the hill by Alan Hale in 63.7 seconds.

Hill climb, Prince Henry Drive, Saturday May 19, 1956

This event organised by the Toowoomba Auto Club was programmed as the "Darling Downs Hill Climb Championship." It was conducted on scenic Prince Henry Drive which skirts the edge of the mountain range on which Toowoomba is situated.

The Fastest Time of the Day of 45.27 secs was set by Charlie Swinburne who was driving Bill Pitt's Cooper-JAP. Charlie Swinburne's drive was a fine effort only 0.54 seconds outside the course record set by Lex Davison in a supercharged Cooper-Vincent with a time of 44.73 seconds. The record had been set on September 17, 1955 when the TAC ran the Australian Hill Climb Championships. The record in the Sports Car Class was broken by Beau Mossetter in the Austin Healey 100S. His time of 48.55 seconds was 4.53 seconds faster than the previous record of 53.08 seconds set by Alan Gourley in an Austin Healey 100.





The other times for Sports Cars were: Ken Ebeling (Triumph TR2) 54.91 seconds, P W Downing (Riley Imp) 58.15 seconds, Ted Jones (MG "TD") 59.16 seconds, Jim Poteri (MG "TF") 60.13 seconds and R. Roberts (MG "TF") 61.94 seconds. "The Toowoomba Chronicle" of May 21, 1956 had this to say about the Riley. "Perhaps the most amazing performance of the meeting was that of P. Downing in his Riley IMP. This combination made faster time than any of the MGs and when it is considered that the Riley is a 1934 model of Under 1100 cc and can beat the MGs which have capacities up to 1500 cc, I think that Mr. Downing should be congratulated heartily."

The best time for a Saloon Car of 59.36 seconds was set by P. Gifford in a Holden he was driving for C. Worley.

Motor Racing, Strathpine, Saturday May 26, 1956



This race meeting at the Strathpine Circuit was organised by the MG Car Club. I entered my Triumph in three handicap events.

The place getters in the 5 lap Restricted Handicap were Tommy Ross (Triumph "TR2") 1, Ken Ebeling (Triumph "TR2") 2, Peter Uscinski (Morris Minor) 3, and Gordon MacNicol (MG"TF") 4.

The fastest times were Jim Bertram (Triumph "TR2") 7m.6s., Jim Johnson (MG "TC" special) 7m.10s., Bill Weekes (MG "TF" 1500) 7m.26s., Ken Ebeling (Triumph "TR2") 7m.28s.

In the 5 lap Sports and Closed Car Handicap the place getters were G. Morrison (MG TD) Dvr. L.W. Whittaker 1, Ken Ebeling (Triumph "TR2") 2, John Gill (MG "TF" 1500) 3, Peter Uscinski (Morris Minor) 4. The fastest times were Jim Johnson (MG "TC" special) 6m.48s, Jim Bertram (Triumph "TR2") 6m.54s, John Gill in his "TF" 1500 and L.W. Whittaker driving the much modified Morrison "TD" were both timed at 7m.20s.

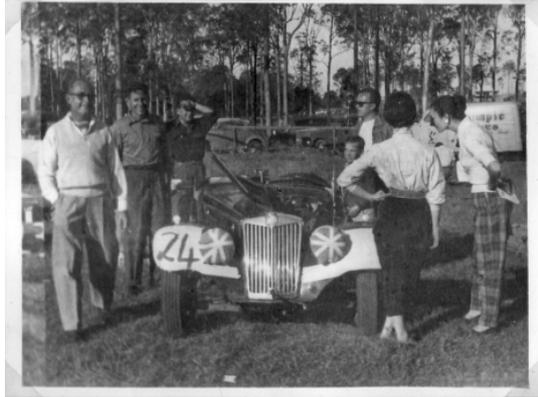
The 10 lap Open Handicap was won by Bill Weekes (MG "TF" 1500) followed by John Gill (MG "TF"1500). Ken Ebeling (Triumph "TR2") was third and ?. Pattel in a VW was fourth. In this event Jim Bertram (Triumph "TR2") was fastest 13m.53s. followed by G Scott (Holden Special) 14m.12s , Bill Weekes at 14m.14s. and John Gill 14m.20s.

On the same programme the 5 lap MG Car Scratch Race was won by Jim Johnson in his MG "TC" Special. The G. Morrison (MG "TD" 1300) entry driven by L.W. Whittaker was second with MacNicol in his 1250 MG "TF" coming home third. There were only five starters and John Gill did not complete the event. The other starter was an otherwise unidentified Smith in an MG "TC".

The final event for the day, the 5 lap Under 1600cc Handicap was won by John Gill (MG "TF" 1500). T. Ross (MG "TC") was second followed by Lord in a VW and Bill Weekes (MG "TF" 1500). The latter made fastest time 7m. 4s, followed by John Gill 7m 11s, Whittaker in the MG "TD"1300 7m. 22s. and Tom Ross in 8m 17s.

So far as I was concerned it had been a good meeting with two second places and a third. For my entry fee of \$1.55 I had won \$24.00 and a Castrol Oils bonus of \$10.05 for my third place in the 10 lap Open Handicap.





The old and the new – Ken's TR2 and his old MG TF

Speed trials, Leyburn, Sunday June 24, 1956

This event conducted by the Toowoomba Auto Club was held on the abandoned Leyburn wartime aerodrome. My log records that I paid the princely sum of one dollar for the privilege.



My own result sheet, probably correct but not official, shows that Rex Taylor in an Alfa Romeo took the course standing start quarter mile record for racing cars with a time of 14.88 seconds. It had previously been held by Pat White in a Cooper 1100 with a time of 15.27 seconds. The Alfa covered the flying quarter mile at an average speed of 211.14 km/h (131.2 mph). This was 4 mph or 6.4 km/h slower than the course and sports car record for the course held by Mrs D. Anderson. In the Sports Car class the best standing start time of 16.83 seconds was recorded by Steve Ames in the Austin Healey 100S. His

speed in the flying was 170.42 km/h (105.9 mph). Peter Downing in the Riley Imp ran the standing quarter in 16.97 seconds but apparently did not run in the flying event. Some of the better times recorded by other competitors are tabled below.

DRIVER	CAR	STANDING START	FLYING START	
		SECONDS	MPH	KPH
Eric Wendt	Jaguar XK120	19.24	100.5	161.73
Jim Poteri	Austin Healy 100	18.32	94.43	151.97
Ann Thomson	Morgan Plus 4	19.86	88.06	141.71
Ted Jones	MG, "TD"	22.00	69.6	112.00
R. Roberts	MG "TF"	22.86	69.13	111.25
Ken Ebeling	Triumph "TR2"	19.06	95.31	153.38

Sprints, Strathpine on Saturday June 30, 1956

The Strathpine airstrip was the venue for another sprint meeting organised by the MG Car Club. The entry fee was half a Guinea, 10 shillings and sixpence or in decimal \$1.05.



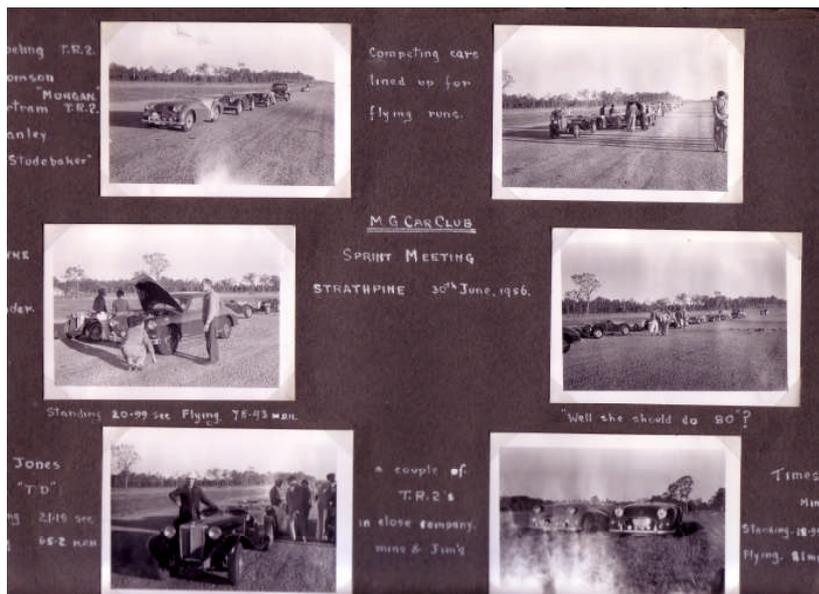
Ken's TR2 lined up ahead of Ann Thomson's Morgan

The event used a system of handicapping but the results given are the actual times recorded from my unofficial result sheet.

The fastest standing start quarter mile 15.88 seconds was that of G Smith in the class for racing cars. The roneoed programme says it was a Ford "A"? In the flying event his speed was 128.7 km/h (80 mph). In the sports car class the best times were recorded by Jim Bertram in his Triumph TR2 with a time of 17.28 seconds in the standing and a speed of 140.9 km/h (87.5 mph). In the closed car class Fred Dyke, the popular proprietor of the Swift Service Station at Morningside, was fastest with a run of 20.99 seconds and a speed of 126.2 km/h (78.43 mph) in his Riley Pathfinder. An MG "Y" driven by E. Ansel made a run of 23.58 seconds and achieved 101.36 km/h (62.98 mph). John Cranley in his father's Studebaker made a run of 23.08 seconds and was timed at 108.41 km/h (67.37 mph). Peter Uscinski in a Minor, presumably a Morris, covered the standing quarter in 21.0 seconds and achieved 105.34 km/h (65.45 mph).

The times and speeds of other competitors in the sports cars class are listed below. J.A. Bonetti ran in the racing car class but is included for comparison.

DRIVER	CAR	STANDING START	FLYING START	
		SECONDS	MPH	KPH
R.J.Barrett	MG "TF"1250	20.74	70.42	113.33
E.G. Jones	MG "TD"1250	21.18	65.17	104.88
T. Ross	MG "TC"1250	21.32	67.26	108.25
R. Richards	MG "TC" 1250	19.94	71.88	115.68
F. Morrison	MG "TD"1300 (Dvr. L. Whittaker)	19.26	78.06	125.62
J.A. Bonetti	MG "TF"1500	19.98	75.95	122.23
K.C. Ebeling	Triumph "TR2"	18.99	81.01	130.37
J. Bertram	Triumph "TR2"	17.28	87.55	140.89
Ann Thomson	Morgan +4	10.04	79.58	128.06



The relatively low speeds in the flying were no doubt due to the fact that the timed section used was slightly uphill and did not allow for a long run into the timed section or for slowing down.

Motor Racing - Lowood on Sunday August 12, 1956

This event was organised by the Queensland Racing Drivers' Club Ltd. There were six car and three motor cycle events on the mixed programme. The entry list for the motorcycles included Royal Enfield, Norton, B.S.A., A.J.S., Matchless, Velocette and Triumph. The price for a programme as shown on the copy in my collection was 10 cents.

This was to be my first visit to Lowood as a competitor. An entry had been submitted for the Sports Car Handicap of four laps, the Main Event of twelve laps, and the four lap Consolation Handicap which would be run on adjusted handicaps. As the main event would be limited to the fastest twenty cars I was unlikely to be a starter.

The entry fee cost me \$8.00 and it proved to be an expensive affair as I destroyed a set of big end bearings during practice. This I found later to be not uncommon when TRs were raced. I was offered a spare set of bearings by another Triumph driver but, having not previously attempted to change the bearings of my car, I declined the kind offer. The rest of the day was spent as a spectator.

At this, or another Lowood meeting, a TR2 competitor showed me a bearing from his car which had become so hot that it fused the steel bearing shell into one continuous strip around the bearing journal. This major problem became evident during competition whenever big end bearings were overstressed. Number four cylinder always suffered most followed by number one.

As an entrant I received a copy of the official results from which the following details were obtained.

The Champions Scratch Race of 3 laps was won by Bill Pitt driving the Anderson D Type Jaguar with Tom Sulman in the DB3S Aston Martin second and C. Adams in an HRG Holden Special third.

While it may sound odd, to anyone who recalls the Ford cars of that era, the 4 lap Saloon Car Handicap was won on handicap by the Ford Customline of D. Cavill followed by another Customline driven by K. Redman. These two cars also made the fastest times in the event. J.B. Wild drove his Holden into third place on handicap and time.

The 4 lap Racing Car Handicap was won by Sid Scott in his Holden Special followed by Charlie Whatmore, who made fastest time, in a Jaguar Special and D.A. Youngs in a Leaf/Olds Special. The only other starter C. Adams in the HRG-Holden Special did not complete the first lap.

The 4 lap Sports Car Handicap was won by Lionel Ayers in an MG TC of 1466cc capacity with the Morrison MG TD of 1300cc capacity driven by L.W. Whittaker coming home second. Bill Weekes in his MG "TF" 1500 was third. Bill Pitt in the D Type Jaguar made fastest time of 8m 28s with Tom Sulman in the DB3S Aston Martin 19 seconds behind.

The 12 lap Main Event saw the place getters of the previous Sports Car Handicap join the winners circle in the same order with the fastest times again going to Pitt and Sulman. It was in this event that Bill Pitt completed the fastest lap of the day with a time of 2m 3s at an average speed of just over 127 km/h for a lap of the 4.35 km circuit. The pre-decimal programme calls the lap distance 2.7 miles.

As a re-handicap was scheduled for the Consolation Handicap of 4 laps with virtually the same starters as in the previous two events the previous winners had to take a back seat. This allowed the Morrison T'D "MG" driven by L.W. Whittaker to win the event followed by Tom Ross in his MG "TC" with Tom Sulman in the Aston Martin coming in third. Tom Sulman made fastest time as the D Type, although entered, did not start. Second fastest time was recorded by G. Scott Holden Special with one of the Toowoomba contingent, Jim Poteri in his Austin Healey 100, third fastest.

The return trip from Lowood back to Toowoomba, including the climb up the range to Toowoomba, was made without any sign of noise from the bearings. An inspection of the bearings the following weekend disclosed a set of bearing shells in not very good condition with scoring evident on crankshaft journal number four. As a result of this disaster it became standard practice to fit a new set of bearings before hill climbs or race meetings and to recheck them after each major event. I even resorted to reusing bearing shells previously fitted to the big ends of cylinders two and three to replace the damaged bearings of cylinders one and four. The bearings from cylinders two and three of the previous set were usually OK and proved quite adequate for normal use. Despite the slight scoring of the number four crankshaft journal there were no problems provided I stuck to my maintenance plan. There was a cure for the problem which I believe involved cross drilling of the journals. This I never got around to despite another year of fairly intensive competition to come in 1957. In the future Lowood was always given a miss in case the situation got worse. Changing bearings was found to be not a difficult task as the sump was a simple pan. There are no fancy seals to main bearing caps and the sump could be taken off in a matter of minutes. A pair of strong wooden ramps were made up to make the job easier on the footpath outside my place of residence in Toowoomba. They are still being used almost forty years later.

Motor_Racing - Leyburn on Sunday, September 23, 1956

This meeting, organised by the Toowoomba Auto Club, was conducted as a supporting event for the well established Toowoomba Carnival of Flowers. It was promoted as the Carnival of Flowers Road Racing Championships.

The principal race of the day was the last event on the programme run as a combined championship and handicap event. The driver making fastest time would be acknowledged as the champion and receive the "Carnival of Flowers Trophy" and \$50 for his win. The title of "Champion" went to Arthur Griffiths in the HWM-Jaguar.

In its report the "Toowoomba Chronicle" had this to say. "Arthur Griffiths drove well to record a fastest time of 2m 40s on the rough track, with a strong westerly wind blowing. He reached 140 miles an hour (225.3 km/h) on the long back straight, with the wind blowing head on. The surface of the Leyburn airstrip is deteriorating rapidly, and now is almost completely covered by tufts of grass in some places. The faster cars, such as the HWM-Jaguar, the Alfa Romeo of Rex Taylor and the Porsche (of Ernie Tadgell), lost much of their traction on the grassy surface. Griffiths' fastest lap time was five seconds slower than the lap record set by Stan Jones in the famous Maybach in 1953."

The handicap event was won by Ernie Tadgell in the Porsche Special. He received a trophy and \$100.

Once again from the "Toowoomba Chronicle".

"With his win, Tadgell broke a long succession of bad luck which had plagued him since he brought the Porsche to Toowoomba about a year ago. He has appeared on several tracks but has been unable to race the car due to breakdowns."

Rex Taylor in the Alfa Romeo was second in the handicap to take home \$70. For his third place Arthur Griffiths received a further \$30. Ann Thomson in her Morgan Plus 4 won \$20 for fourth and Pat White in his Austin Healey, with his \$10 for fifth, would have just covered his entry fee for the programme with a couple of dollars left over for fuel. For coming home sixth Eric Wendt in the XK120 Jaguar had to be satisfied with the fun of it. Among the entries for the championship there were only three specialist racing cars and they took out the first three places. The rest of the field were pure production sports cars, one XK120 Jaguar (Wendt), three Austin Healeys (Richardson, White and Poteri), a Triumph TR2 (Ebeling), a Morgan Plus 4 (Thomson) and two MGs. One MG was a "TF" 1500 (Weekes) and the other a "TD" (Jones). With the possible exception of Richardson's Austin Healey, sports cars would have been driven to the track.

My entry fee for four of the five events on the programme, including the championship event, was the princely sum of \$6.30. The day was to be a bitter disappointment for me which is best told by the "Toowoomba Chronicle".

"K. Ebeling robbed himself of the handicap section of the championship when he ran out of petrol with only half a lap to go. Ebeling at this time had an easy lead over Tadgell and looked the certain winner of the section."

To be truthful I did not realise the rate at which my Triumph "TR2" would use fuel on the long high speed straights of the 6.92km circuit. In the last few laps I realised that I could run out of fuel and considered pulling into the pits and asking friends to get a small

tin of petrol ready for a quick stop on the next lap. As a stop would have put me out of the running I decided to take a chance. The result, while most disappointing, was not totally unexpected. My race came to an end two thirds of the way down the back straight. To be truthful my handicap was seen by the back markers to be pretty liberal so perhaps it was poetic justice. I had not managed to run a place in any of the earlier events either.

The results of the other events were as follows.

All Powers Scratch race (3 laps)

A. Griffiths (HWM Jaguar) 1, Rex Taylor (Alfa Romeo) 2, E. Tadgell (Porsche) 3.

Sports car handicap (5 laps)

W. Weekes (MG "TF" 1500)	Handicap	1m. 15s.	1.
E. Wendt (Jaguar XK120)		2m. 25s.	2.
P. White (Austin Healey)		2m 00s.	3.

Sports and racing car handicap (5 laps)

E. Tadgell (Porsche)	Handicap	5m. 00s.	1
E. Wendt (Jaguar XK120)		4m. 50s.	2
A. Griffiths (HWM Jaguar)		9m. 00s.	3

Saloon car handicap (5 laps)

E. Falconer (Ford Customline)	Handicap	2m. 35s.	1.
entered by Falconer Motors.			
A. Gourley (Peugeot)		1m. 20s.	2.
J. Woods (Ford Zephyr)		2m. 10s.	3.
entered by Falconer Motors			

This race attracted the following comment in the "Toowoomba Chronicle"

"The saloon car handicap saw the line-up of a Volkswagen, a Prefect, a Peugeot, an MG Magnette, two Consuls, a Zephyr, and a Customline. The interest in the race was centred on a clash between the Prefect driven by B. Gibbings and the Volkswagen driven by Barry Griffiths. The Prefect showed more speed on the straights, but Griffiths made up the leeway on cornering. The two cars raced neck and neck for the five laps, and finished with no more than half a car length separating them, the Prefect doing slightly the better." Sad to relate neither finished in the prize money.

The Prefect was also an entry from Falconer Motors making three cars in all. If my memory serves me correctly this was the race meeting where the trio of Fords lost all three windscreens as well as some side windows and at least one rear window. Not much of a return for supporting motor sport in the city of Toowoomba where Falconer Motors had the Ford dealership.

Hill climb, Prince Henry Drive on Saturday October 27, 1956

This event, on the popular Toowoomba course which had been used in September, 1955 for the Australian Hill Climb Championship, was organised by the Toowoomba Auto Club. The event attracted only fifteen nominations. The list was made up of seven closed cars and seven sports cars. Not all started on the day of the event. The only racing car entered was the Porsche of Ernie Tadgell who made fastest time up the hill of 51.57 seconds.

The fastest times of the other competitors were as follows.

CLOSED CARS

DRIVER	CAR	BEST TIME SECONDS
A. Wickham	Holden	60.08
F.A. Gourley	Ford Prefect	63.05
K. Erbs	Ford Prefect	64.54
D. Stark	Volkswagen	64.56
M.S. Marshall	Ford Anglia	64.64

SPORTS CARS

DRIVER	ENTRANT	CAR	BEST TIME SECONDS
J. Poteri		Austin Healey 5	54.07
D. Young	R. Hamilton	Jaguar XK120	54.09
K. Ebeling		Triumph "TR2"	56.80
R. Hamilton		Doretti	57.10
P. Downing		Riley Imp	57.92
R. Roberts		MG "TF"	57.95

The October TAC Hill Climb was my final competitive event for the year as during November I embarked an overhaul of my "TR2". The motor was taken out, the crankshaft reground and the ridges left at the top of the cylinder liners due to wear removed. On reassembly, and this will surely upset the purists, the liners were rotated through 90 degrees and inserted with the worn thrust sides facing the gudgeon pin bosses.

I recorded the following expenses.		£	s	d	\$	c
November	Grinding crankshaft and supplying bearings	17	18	1	35	81
	Gaskets and washers	4	16	0	9	60
	Misc. items	4	4	3	8	43
December	Brake cylinder kit	2	4	9	4	48
	Lukey Muffler	5	18	0	11	80
	Tyre	7	13	6	15	35

The labour was supplied by me and the crankshaft and liners was by Repco. Whether it ran any better I don't recall but the results obtained during 1957 in some events tend to suggest that there may have been some improvement.

Hill climb, Burleigh Heads, Sunday December 30, 1956

As my father was ill in the Kilcoy Hospital I did not compete at the event organized by the Pacific Car Club on the course used earlier in the year. As a number of my friends from Toowoomba took part I have included some of the results and incidents as reported in the January, 1957 issue of Motor Sport in Queensland. "George Smith in his MG TC overturned on a curve and practically wrecked his car. Smith received only light injuries to his arm. Poteri gave the crowd one of its greatest thrills when he spun out of control at the hairpin bend to the safety road. The motor of Lionel Ayres MG blew its head (sic) and had to retire."

The fastest time of the day (49.2 seconds) was that of Steve Ames in an Austin Healey (Was it the A-H 100S?) Next fastest was Rex Taylor (49.9 seconds) Alfa Romeo, and my friend Jim Poteri (50.1 seconds) in his Austin Healey was third fastest. The fastest saloon was that of Joe Wild in his Holden but no time was given in the report. R Hamilton (51.4 seconds) in the Doretti made a better time than I had managed (52.5) earlier in the year. He had entered in the racing car class which left the sports car class, up to 2000cc, in the hands of Ann Thomson (54.1 seconds) driving her Morgan. Another friend, Vince Jordan, in his MGA, which would have been my car had I not bought the TR2, made a best run of 51.2 seconds. Jim Poteri got his photograph in the magazine with the caption 'J Poteri (Austin Healey) corrects a slide at Burleigh'.