

Launch Edition



RACER

INSIDE THE BATTLE OF THE YEAR



*The Men
The Politics
The Future*

2008 In Review + the
MGRacer Awards



**Sherlock Holmes
MG Racings new man**

On the Block





RACER

Welcome to the MG Racer e-zine!

Under the bonnet

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LAUNCH EDITION

Maybe not quite a collectors item

Hello and welcome to the first ever MG Racer E-zine.

It has been something we have played with for a few months now and is fantastic to see finally going. In each issue we hope to bring everything to do with MG Racing, from news, points scores, reports, previews, feature stories, history and lots more.

Obviously we have a fair way to go so stay patient as this develops over the next few months. We do have a few new things that hopefully will be in issue number 2. I will keep those a secret for the meantime though. Hopefully you all enjoy reading this as much as we enjoyed making it. You will probably find this a small issue...and yes it is but its not a very exciting

time of the year for news so hopefully once we get closer to the season start we will have a bit more to add.

The electronic magazine is designed to be printer friendly, designed to be easy to read and easy to take into work or put on a coffee table...after all its designed for you, the MG Racer!

Why have we done this? Well it's fairly straight forward, there is no real informative source in MG Racing, website, magazine or newsletter so we came up with this. Hopefully you all support it and we can move forward over the next few months to create something exciting and interesting.

I would like to thank all those that have helped get this issue underway,

to Ken, Robert and Jason Holmes.

Lastly I need to thank my co-editor Trent Price, we have worked very hard for the last few weeks and we are both very excited to see the final product. There has been a lot of emails and phone calls but we are both very happy with our first issue. We look forward to hearing what you all think!

Please let us know what you think by contacting us at

mgracermag
@yahoo.com.au

Cheers, Enjoy!
Paul Vernall

Misfire—The Rumour File

Mort Fitzgerald was scene sniffing around Ingolstadt over the Christmas break, his official reason was a holiday however spies have told us he was seen at the Audi Sport HQ shopping for a new toy...



The MG Racing experience seems to be taking strides forward with Matt Baragwanath being booted from the ex-MoPro 'F' in favour of a 'baby faced assassin'



Adrian Akhurst announced he had purchased yet another racing MG, ex 'team Atomic Kitten' BTCC MG ZS.

There is a persistent rumour that a driver who has not been in action for a few years may make a return in 2009...when we aren't sure but it sounds rather exciting.

'08 was one of the most exciting seasons yet, it also pointed to the future of MG Racing, We took a look back at the year gone

The closest MG Racing Championship for sometime was exactly that for a number of reasons; reliability (or lack thereof) and hard-fought track space. After seizing an early lead at Sandown, Robert Haywood and championship protagonist Ken Price both experienced mechanical woes at Winton. – with Haywood's camshaft self-destructing and Price's Toyo's surrendering seemingly in sympathy. The pendulum shifted at Calder, with Ken building a 30-point buffer over Haywood, only to waste the excess with a high-tech problem of forgetting to "filler-up" in race one.

With points effectively tied going into the final round at Phillip Island, a palpable amount of internal discord had inevitably crept its way into the paddock – most of it imagined – but without a recalcitrant Toyota in sight to scupper the chances of either opponent, the title was eventually decided in Price's favour by a mere four points. A sensational drive from Haywood in the last race saw him record a sub-two minute time despite the loss of 3rd gear – who knows what an overdrive in 2nd could've seen him achieve?



The most improved driver of the season had to be that of Richard Milligan, whose Massa-esque development behind the wheel will undoubtedly leave other competitors under no misapprehension about his abilities in 2009. Likewise, South Australian James Evins was unfortunate not to receive a Rookie of the Year gong after displaying a secretively progressive rise in performances during the year.

"Haywood...re
corded a sub-
two minute
time despite
the loss of 3rd
gear"



A number of competitors were caught out in '08, with the cars of David Mottram, Graham Thomas and Bob Nordlinger all becoming casualties during the first half of the season. It's worth mentioning that while David and Bob walked away without injury, Graham was very lucky to emerge with the (admittedly severe) injuries he did sustain; a timely reminder that we are all fallible, and to exercise caution even under the spell of the red mist.

2008 would also be the last – for some time at least – where a field of sole MG's would grace the grid. With next year's rules to include invited British cars, we could see a rather bipolar grid consisting of modern MGF's and venerable pommy machinery. Either way, in the current economic climate, the irony is we could be looking forward to our greatest season yet.

The 2008 MG Racer awards:

Qualifier of the year:

Chris Gidney—Qualifying 6th at Phillip Island in the wet and showing the wiser fellows a clean pair of heels.

Racer of the year:

Kim Cole for his drive at Phillip Island in the wet, looking right at home and passing around the outside!!!

Rookie of the year:

James Evins—every round he improved to show he will become a force

(Our budgets don't allow actual trophies to be made...our apologies)

Price Attack

Ken Price ended one of the most hard fought MG seasons on top, we spoke to him

MGR: What are your thoughts on season 2008?

KP: A great season, very competitive. It was good for the category to have such a close finish to the year, with two drivers locked on points going into the last race of the season.

MGR: The final round certainly threw a curve ball, how did you keep a straight head through it all?

KP: I've been in such a position before in Championships, and have learnt to just treat it like another race, and just focus on doing as best that I could. After qualifying and race 1, we discovered a minor engine problem that was slowing me down, and with that rectified for race 2, I was actually right alongside Robert when he lost 3rd gear. And when it rained and he spun off, that gave me a 3 position advantage on the grid for the vital race 3. Once I had established a nice break, I just cruised

home, going just as fast as necessary to win.

MGR: Many people know



about the rivalry that came out in '08, do you believe it was a healthy one?

I have always enjoyed a healthy rivalry with my fellow competitors, and have always shown them respect on the track, and expect to have that reciprocated, which is the ethos of MG racing. Robert and I have been close competitors for many years, but I do respect his car preparation and dedication to his racing.

MGR: Why do you most enjoy racing with in MG's?

KP: Close racing with no contact and good camaraderie amongst the group. It is also great to be able to race with my son, Trent, and bring his racing career along.

MGR: Will you be back to defend in 2009 or are there other plans?

KP: I plan to drive the MGF Cup car in 2009, and pass the MGB over to Trent, as I think that is good to have a new challenge for both of us. I'm also looking to consolidate the MG Racing Experience rental business to give other people the chance to experience MG Racing and hopefully bring them into the category as permanent racers with their own cars. And if there is time, I'll do the MG Club Championship series and the Victorian Hillclimb series!!!

"I do respect his car preparation and dedication"

Price on Haywood



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Robert Haywood came so close to a win however lady luck didn't fall his way

MGR: What are your thoughts on season 2008?

RH: Honestly it was an unusual season, car was superb when it ran. The year finished disappointingly but that's racing. Ken drove very well all year, to his credit he kept on track and drove a very committed 10 lap race at PI.

MGR: The final round threw up everything, How did you cope with it all?

RH: My background allows me to get on with racing when I get in the car, the car was running well early on and I was able to short shift sometimes. But Ken is a hard racer and I knew he would fight back, I knew I needed a great start for race 2, I knew I had a good line into southern loop and went back from 3rd overdrive to 3rd the gearbox broke, I couldn't get it in 3rd so had to go to 4th.

MGR: Do you wonder what if? What if I didn't lose 3rd gear?

RH: I say this and I don't think its arrogance but if I didn't lose 3rd gear I would have won, Race 1 showed I had the speed to win. I don't think Ken would have caught me, but that's racing Ken drove very hard for the win.

MGR: The rivalry was one that got everyone's attention, what are you thoughts on that rivalry?

RH: The rivalry I think goes back to when Ken ran his red F, It has just got to this point where we both run Sb cars. Ken has an enormous capacity to win and it showed throughout the year.

MGR: What are your plans for 2009? To take that title or are there other plans?

RH: It's interesting, I am building a new car but that has stopped while the new regulations get drafted in. My Sb car is sitting waiting for the refreshed gearbox and then I can throw it together. I'm very happy with that car, If I run state series I will run the Sb car, The financial



"Ken is a hard
racer and I
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fight back
" Haywood on Price

One of the best years yet? 2009 looks to be a ripper

The 2009 MG (and invited cars) calendar is one that is much better planned than '08, Get your Diary's out, here it is.

Round 1

April 25-26
Phillip Island G.P Circuit

Round 2

May 23-24
Sandown Raceway

Round 3

18-19 July
Sandown Raceway

Round 4

August 29-30
Winton Raceway

Round 5

September 26-27
Phillip Island G.P Circuit

Non Championship Event

Sandown Historics
TBC (November)

We will cover all these events with reports and points scores...so for all your MG Round news you know where to come!

Sherlock Holmes!

He may be new to Australia, but he already has a title up his sleeve. We investigated into 'Rookie' Jason Holmes

One driver new to MG Racing this season will not only be adjusting to circuits, but the international timeline as well – in fact, if he's too quick, we might all be having to use it as an excuse!

Jason Holmes is no stranger to motorsport, having spent 5 years racing a Rover Tomcat in the U.K. Jason was the LMA Eurosaloons Champion in 2006, as well as spreading his driving duties at the Croix circuit in Northern France.



So what does a Pom with a title in his kit do for his next

challenge?.. He's buys an MGF-Cup and migrates to Oz!

"For our trip to Oz I bought the road MG TF and the race spec TF" said Jason. ".. Since we were heading to Australia an open top race car seemed the ideal option!"

Unaware of Phillip Island's inclement weather, Holmes might be pushing his luck, but actually hopes to be splitting his driving duties between the Cup TF and his Rover Tomcat – which made the trek out as well.

"The Tomcat itself was raced and backed by Rover between 1994 and 1996, and supported F1 and other high profile races" sites Holmes. Its profile di-

minished by 1997 as Rover shifted focus to the MGF Cup series – in fact both cars were developed by the same people, with the same teams and drivers.



Dragging both cars half way across the globe to compete in our humble series, there's no doubting Jason's dedication and enthusiasm to the MG/ Rover marquee.. Just don't mention the Ashes..

".. Jason was the LMA Eurosaloons Champion in 2006"



GOT NEWS?

If you have anything you would like to contribute or ideas for stories then please let us know, we are always on the look out for interesting stories or perhaps you have some news of your own that we can put up...anonymous if you like!!!

**Send to:
mracermag@yahoo.com.au**

We Want Your Feedback

We at MG Racer want to know what you—the MG Racer—would like to read, see, etc. so fill this small form out so we can see what you want!

If you have a scanner simply print this off, fill it out and scan it to your email and send it back

What do you want to see more of?

- Feature stories
- Reports/previews
- Other (comments)

How often would you like to see issues?

- After each round
- Monthly
- Quaterley

Comments:

What did you think of the format?

- Easy to read/clean
- Hard to read/untidy
- Other (comments)

Is the magazine balanced in presenting stories?

- Yes
- No
- Other (Comment)

Name _____

AAA Performance

With the absence of a proper 'State-of-Origin' race meeting on the calendar over the past few years, it's been surprising to notice an unofficial rivalry brewing between the Victorian and South Australian contingent.



The strong Southern contingent is primarily thanks to the work of Adrian Akhurst and Rodney Gibb, who prepare, lease and transport MG's respectively across the border to compete in the Victorian Championship –with strong showings from 'lease' drivers such as Kim Cole and James Evins.

Adrian's MG workshop, AA Automotive has been in operation for 20-odd years restoring MG's and building performance parts and enhancements.

His membership of the South Australian and Victorian MG Car clubs is a testament to Adrian's passion for the marque.

Whilst the majority of Adrian and Rodney's cars are either MGF's or Cup F's, one car Adrian has shipped from the UK has garnered a lot of interest from both the MG and non-MG fraternity.

His black MG ZT V8, with a MG V8 (Mustang Engine) sounds like thunder when going, but the black monster has had the odd teething problem; such as finding a clutch that can handle it's 450-odd horsepower!..

.. When they do, expect Mort Fitzgerald to be poking around their transporter

Picture Wall



“...handle it's 450-odd horsepower!..”

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The British are coming!!!

Revered British marques to invade

MG Racer have been informed by war carrier-pigeon that in the interests of larger grids and closer racing, a contingent of British Marques (consistent with the 'spirit' of the MG) will be invited to compete in the 2009 MG Road Racing Championship. Categories likely to be targeted for inclusion will be Sprites, Healey's and Triumphs. Other marques possibly to enter the series will be considered via submission to the MG Racing Committee. Whilst final details were yet to come to hand at the time of publication, MG Racer has taken it upon itself to preview a very rough guide of what it thinks might be gracing our grid in 2009...

stamina of Marc-Lewis Francis and body of Monica Bellucci, would you really be complaining?



This cute roadster had an extensive Le Mans and rally-ing history. Based on the humble Hillman Husky; a short wheel-based station wagon itself based on the Minx – which in turn could never be classified in brochures due to post-war restrictions. Quite handy for salesmen trying to pass lawnmowers off as a shuttle-buses. Most recently seen loitering around opportunistic Mel Brooks remakes.

Austin-Healey 100/6/3000

A very pretty, if agricultural car – may have given Stalin's 5-Year plan the sex appeal it needed if it weren't for an absence of a few hotshoe Bolsheviks! A rally star and occasional Le Mans starter, the 3000 model took an unexpected 6 hr Relay win at Amaroo Park in 1977; largely due to reliability and a fabled reputation as "the black and white car - which chromatically inclined competitors were somewhat fearful of."



Sprite

Not a soft-drink on wheels, but an incredible motor vehicle capable of producing electrical discharges that occur high above the cumulonimbus cloud of an active thunderstorm. This wondrous ability earned it the reputation as one of the most feared cars in road racing history. Not to be confused with a fictional member of the race of Eternals in the Marvel Comics Universe

"Not a soft-drink on wheels..."



Triumph TR4A

Rugged Michelotti-styled machine had a brief works rallying career before going onto a more successful career in the SCCA. Also great for terrorizing proletarians at picnics. Really just a re-bodied TR3, but when you're dealing with the

Sunbeam Alpine



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Editors:
Trent Price
Paul Vernall
Pictures:
Paul Vernall

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MG in the big time!

MG Stalwart Mort Fitzgerald has been one of the most successful MG Racers in over twenty years of history, his car must surely have records of its own. Mort entered his red MG B V8 in the Victorian Tourist Trophy at Phillip Island in November, for those that don't know this event it is a 60 minute Sports Car race for all comers from FIA GT specification cars to Clubmans, MX-5's and MG's.

Now we all know Mort and his MG B are fast, but he held the MG name up high when he Qualified 7th outright from nearly 40 entries including Lamborghini, Viper and Porsche's. His heat race didn't quite go so well with a DNF, but he took the start of the feature race on Sunday afternoon.



After a solid start the full tank of fuel caught him out, dropping him back to last on lap 1, so Mort put his head down and starting picking them off one by one, moving inside the top 30, then top 20 and finally inside the top 10. After an hour of racing Mort came across to take the chequered flag in 5th, an amazing performance against the million dollar machinery, only beaten by the best of exotica, Porsche Cups, an FIA Gallardo and FIA Viper...a truly great performance in an amazing car. Mort you did MG Racing proud!

Were on myspace!
www.myspace.com/mgracingvictoria



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MG Racer—for MG Racers

Taking Over—Sandown Historics

It was great to see MG Racers taking over at Sandown Historics

It is always exciting to see MG's out on track battling against other sports cars from across the world, whether it's a Porsche, Austin Healey or Datsun...Group S brings us exactly this and at the 2008 Sandown Historics we saw Mark O'Neill, Lloyd Perrin, Ross Kaigg and Peter Rose take on the large 38 car field.

O'Neill had a solid run in qualifying putting his MG B in 24th (3rd MG) ahead of Perrin and Rose in 30th and 31st respectively.

Race 1 on Saturday afternoon saw O'Neill drop to 26th, with Perrin moving to 28th with a BMW in between them. Ross Kaigg joined Rose down in 30th and 31st. Race 2, Sunday morning and O'Neill who had led the Victorian MG charge suffered a DNF as Lloyd Perrin took up the Victorian challenge and placed a well deserved 20th! Kaigg

moved into 22nd with a super drive and Rose got 25th. By the time we got to Race 3 and the final on Sunday afternoon just 28 cars took the start, with no Rose and no O'Neill the pressure was on Perrin and Kaigg who finished 17th and 19th respectively and 2nd and 3rd MG!!! Only beaten by Geoff Pike from NSW.

Elsewhere Ken Price ran his immaculate silver Porsche 904 GTS in Regularity, picking up a well earned 5th in his first run, 21st in his second and 10th in the final run.

Paul Trevethan took to the big time with his Elfin MR6L Formula 5000, not quite like a duck to water and with a few problems plaguing his weekend, he unfortunately didn't finish a race, but it was great to see 3 Elfin F5000's out in force representing Australia against Lola, McRae, McLaren, March and more.

In Next Months Issue:

- We put together season 2009
- Preview Phillip Island Historics
- New Features
- Plus more!!!!