



VOL 41 #6 June 2023



MG's at the Jefferson 500

From The Editor :

It's the longest day of the year – June 21. How did we get here so fast? Just a few days ago we were turning our clocks ahead.

“Twenty + years ago, Bill Scott and his good friend, Brian Redman wanted to have first class Vintage racing on the Summit Point™ circuit, so they created the Jefferson 500. Invitations were sent to their friends and others with older historical sports cars and the Jefferson 500 was born” *from the Summit Point website*

There were nearly 20 MG's from Kurt Byrnes incredibly fast TD to 6 MGB's, 5 Midgets and 6 MGA's on my count. Well done MGVR.

For the MGVR 100th centenary at Lime Rock, we now have 52 MG's entered and we want more. If you are wondering, or not sure, keep in mind the older, slower cars will race with the war years class and the others will have their own ALL MG races. Add to that a Sunday every MG race and you can expect one hell of a weekend.

Our big tent, tables and chairs are secure in a beautiful grassy area under a tree next to the false grid. We will have a specific parking area in paddock B for MG racers. Every race or concours entrant will get a goodie bag with premiums and the event tee shirt, dash plaque and phenomenal 100th anniversary poster.

Friday night's dinner will feature none other than Mike Dale OBE and motorsports hall of famer plus Chuck Cantwell of transAm fame with Shelby and Penske plus group 44 Paul Brand. All champion racers.

Saturday is the MGVR Pot Luck BBQ for everyone at our hospitality tent. Folks are bringing all kinds of wonderful photos, magazines and memorabilia.

What are you waiting for?

Jefferson 500 Race Report:

By: Jeff Bare

Red 1967 MGB #151 or 51

After three difficult years at this racing thing, I logged my third successful race weekend with the Vintage Racing Group (VRG) in the Jefferson 500 at Summit Point 19 through 21 May. My red number 151 MGB ran super well, as my “crew chief” Jim Spurgeon and I finally found a good set up for the car. It was not without trial or dodgy moments, but by and large, a very successful weekend.

Fun with old cars...

I have found that the vintage racing community is a tight and happy bunch. It is always fun to see the usual suspects and friends similarly afflicted by little British cars and the racing bug. I also met some new friends like the Grimshaws (190 MGB), Dave Good (237 MGB) who hauled in from Ontario, Canada, and Mike



Zappa, who brought his newly built and beautiful TVR (Kent Ford motor). After car issues resulted in no competition laps last year, getting back on track this year with a willing and capable car was really, really nice. Everything simply worked (mostly). We had some issues but got on top of them thanks to motor builder Mike Kusch’s advice and the handy work of crew chief Jim. To my great relief, the motor, gearbox and steering wheel actuator all worked pretty well together. The weekend started Thursday with a practice day. We wanted to get some break-in time on the newly rebuilt motor and determine if we had resolved a high RPM issue we found on a test day at Dominion Raceway in Virginia a few weeks earlier. It was evident about 100 yards out of the pits that the problem was still there, so I trundled around the track, bringing the car back in to do some major ignition surgery. Long story short, Jim and I replaced the points-based distributor with a FAST electronic ignition. It took the remainder of the day to get things changed and buttoned up, but we were ready to try again Friday morning.

Race Days Friday morning dawned beautifully and with fingers crossed coupled with a few silent prayers, I took the car out for the qualifying session. It worked !



The car pulled all the way to 7000 rpm with no hesitation. I knew right then we were set to have a good weekend. After only four laps of motor break-in work, I pulled back in to the paddock and declared to Jim “we have a race car!” As I was focusing on breaking in the motor, my qualifying time wasn’t great at 1:42.00, putting me at 36 out of the 37 who qualified, but I was very happy regardless

as *I knew* I had something for the races. We were testing the gearbox too. It is a custom built, straight cut, close ratio gear set in a late B case I’ve had since the 2021 season. Since it is the first of its kind by the builder, it needed a lot of sorting and ultimately needed to be rebuilt over the winter. It worked beautifully and with a very tall first gear, I was able to use it for starts and turns 1 and 5 to my great advantage.

With my qualifying time, I was gridded towards the back for the Friday afternoon sprint race. Starting 36th, I started off strong, picking off cars pretty quickly. By the checkered flag on lap 11, I stood 22nd, and logged the 11th fastest lap. More importantly, no tow back to the pits and I beat my previous best time at Summit Point by a full second on three-year-old tires. Things were looking good.

Saturday morning started off a little underwhelming as I started 11th and finished 10th after the race was Black Flagged and shortened to just three laps due to multiple incidents on track, one of which happened in right front of me. A Datsun 2000 broke an axle, dropped differential oil on the track and caused a 911 to spin off track into the tire barriers. Saturday afternoon’s race, likely witnessed by my fellow MG Club of Washington D.C. Centre members who made the trip out to Summit Point that day, was much more satisfying as I again started 11th, but was able to get into a racing rhythm over the 15 lap race. The really fast guys took off, but soon I found myself dicing at the front of the second pack. I had a great race with a Volvo 1800 and eventually passed him with a couple laps to go, pulling away to finish sixth overall, and third in EPv class. This race gave me a huge boost of confidence in the car and myself.

Sunday morning was the one-hour enduro and we needed to do some testing of adjustments to help keep oil temperatures down. We had no intent on running the full hour and as it turned out, I only made four laps, one of which was my fastest lap of the weekend to that point, before bringing the car in to make some

adjustments. The adjustments took longer than hoped, so we took a pass on the rest of the enduro and focused on being ready for the afternoon race.

By Sunday afternoon many of the entrants had packed up and started off for home, so that race is a combination of small and medium bore cars. Miatas, MGAs, MGBs, Renault Sports Racers, Porsches, Sprites, Midget's, Triumphs, 240z, all thrown together, numbering about 20 cars. Griding is first come, first served, so I started seventh. I got a really good start and by turn one, lo and behold, I passed everybody and was first! I really wanted to lead that first lap so I hustled the car as much as I dared on cold tires and brakes to lead my first full lap. The eventual winner in a super-fast Miata passed me later on the second lap and took off, leaving me to fend off another Miata and a Renault Sports Racer. I held them off until lap 9 or 10 when I noticed the oil temperature getting very hot. I had to let the Renault through (the other Miata had retired) and cool off the motor. I was able to get the temperature under control but lost contact with the Renault so I sort of cruised around for the rest of the race as I had separated from the rest of the pack. Final result was third overall and first in class. A class win and my fastest lap of the weekend at 1:32.6!

Big smile

Friday through Sunday my performance improved, the car went like stink, lap times dropped and I moved up the charts. I feel like I am starting to



catch up with the car. The only disappointment of the weekend was a total fail on my part with the GoPro. No video of the weekend at all. Next up is the Pitt Race in July. A good weekend there and I'll shed the rookie stripes.

The road to this point has been challenging, but a weekend like the one we had at Summit Point goes a long way towards making the effort worth it and I couldn't do any of this without the help of Jim Spurgeon and the support of Team Owner and Principal Susan. On to Pittsburgh! On to Lime Rock!

100 YEARS OF MG – DECADE BY DECADE **HAGERTY**

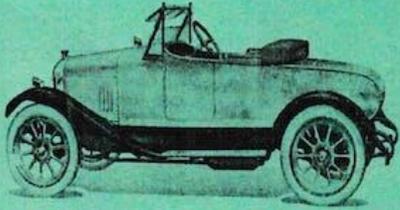
Nik Berg

17 April 2023

A century ago, the Oxford *Isis* newspaper carried an advertisement for a new car dubbed The Super Sports Morris.

Promising “*Real Speed, Real Comfort, Distinguished Appearance, Beautiful Proportions and Superlative Paintwork*” for £350 it was also the first known display of a simple, yet instantly memorable octagonal logo with the letters “MG” inside.

xxxii THE ISIS. November 28th, 1923.



The  Super Sports Morris

Real Speed
Real Comfort
Distinguished Appearance
Beautiful Proportions
Superlative Coachwork

£350 11.9 h.p.

Write us now for details of this new model or better still call in at our showrooms and inspect one.

The Morris Garages,
Queen Street Showrooms,
Oxford. 'Phone 942. Wire 'Auto.'

Printed for the University Newspapers, Ltd., by THE HOLYWELL PRESS, Ltd., Oxford, and published at 9 Alfred Street, High Street, Oxford. November 28th, 1923.

Cecil Kimber, manager of Morris Garages of Queen Street, Oxford, had recently received permission from William Morris to turn his practical family cars into something altogether more sporty, and this was the ad that announced the new MGs to the world—well Oxfordshire, at least. Over the next 100 years MG would rise, fall, and rise again, passing through the hands of corporate owners from near and far. It would be championed by the Ford family, kick start America’s obsession with British sports cars, but vanish without trace from these shores three decades later. Yet, even now the MG Owners’ Club is the biggest single-make car club in the world, such is the fondness for the marque.



Cyberster MG

More recently MG has been reinvented into an award-winning budget brand, while the future holds much promise in the form of a return to its sports car roots. As we await the arrival of the Cyberster sports car and the beginning of a new century for MG, let's fill a few moments charting the course of the last 100 years.

1920s

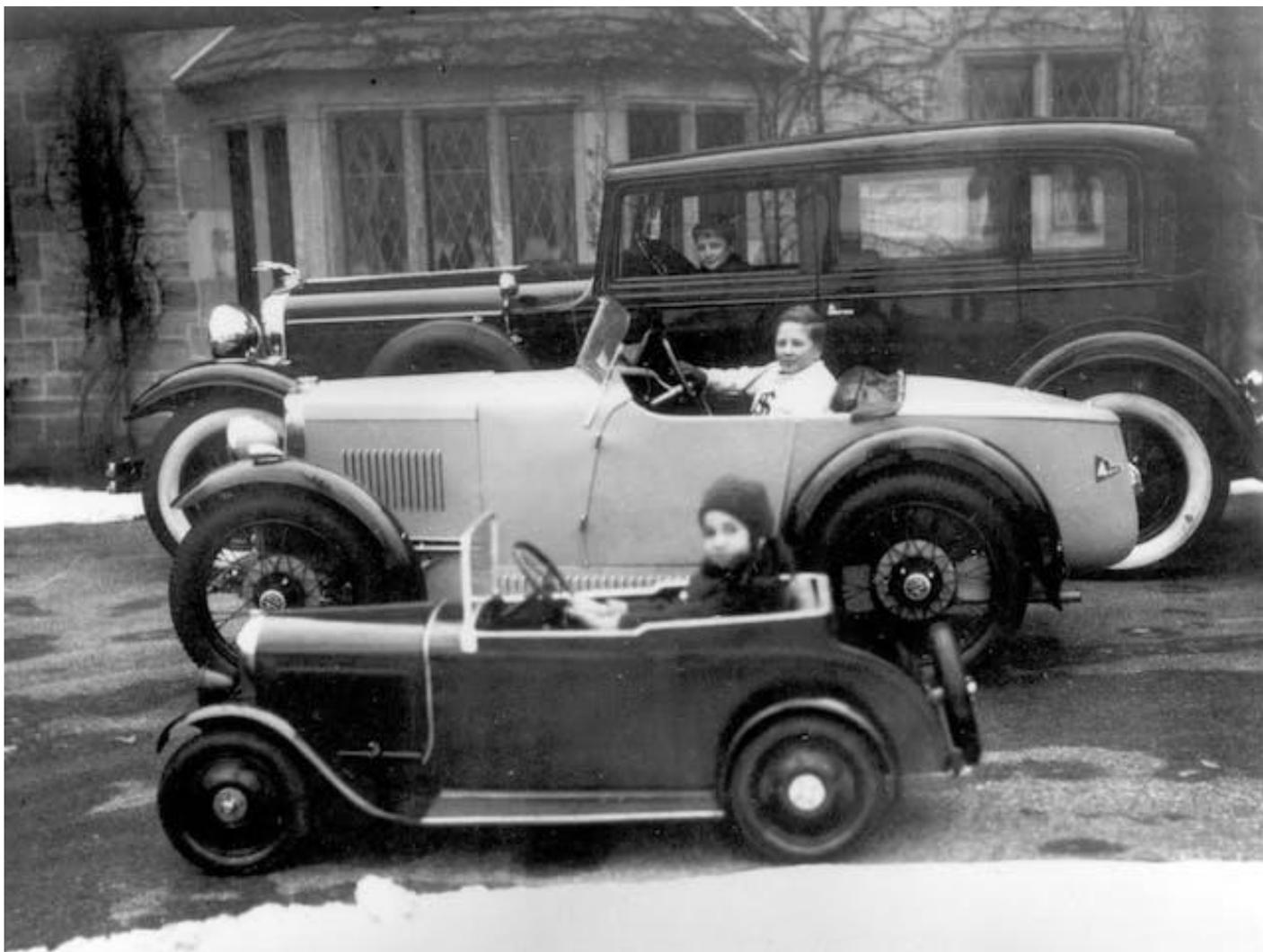
MG Old Number

One MG Owners Club

MG's first model, the Super Sports Morris, was road registered in August of 1923, with six cars being put together in Queen Street. Two years later came the brand's first foray into motorsports with "Old Number One," custom-built on a Morris Cowley chassis. Kimber scored a gold medal in the Light Car Class of the Land's End Trial, establishing a reputation for reliability. In 1927 MG moved to a new factory in Oxford and in 1928 the MG Car Company was legally registered.



1930s



Henry Ford in America's first MG (center), flanked by Benson and Josephine Henry Ford Museum

In 1930 MG found its first American fan in Edsel Ford, who imported a yellow M-Type Midget. Over the course of three years Ford reportedly drove the car 27,000 miles around Grosse Pointe, Michigan, before lodging the little car in the company's museum. In 1935 MG's success was noted by Morris and the sports car company was bought out. By the time its factory's output was diverted to the war effort in 1939 18,664 MGs had been built.

1940s



The relief of peace was tarnished by the tragic death of MG's founder Cecil Kimber in a train crash in London. Fortunately, good news would soon follow as, in 1946, the 20 MG TCs were officially imported to the United States. One of those attracted the attention of California Jeep



1945-49 MG TC Midget

BMR-0703-1225

An MG Car Club image for editorial purposes only

dealer Kjell Qvale who secured the distribution rights for the whole of the West Coast. In 1947 just 243 MGs were sold in America, but thanks to Qvale it would rapidly grow to become the company's biggest market. Thus began an American obsession with British sports cars that is still healthy today.

1950s

Having soldiered on with essentially pre-war designs, 1955 saw the first truly new MG for the best part of 20 years. The delightful MGA was an immediate success with 13,000 built in its first year. Twelve months later MG's total production reached the 100,000 milestone thanks largely to the demand from the U.S.



1960s



Stefan Lombard

By this point MG was part of the British Motor Corporation, makers of the Mini, which also gave the company access to Austin Healey's little Sprite platform. The MG Midget was launched in 1961 and a big brother followed in 1962 in the form of the MGB. Initially sold as a roadster, a Pininfarina-style GT hardtop coupe came along in 1965 and cemented the B as America's favorite British sports car for the next 20 years.

1970s



MG

At the end of the 1960s MG had been amalgamated, along with Austin, Morris, Triumph, Jaguar, and Land Rover, into the nationalized British Leyland. MG production accelerated with the B reaching 250,000 units by 1971, and the brand's one millionth model was assembled in 1975. Even the Midget exceeded the 220,000 mark by the time it reached the end of its life in 1979.

1980s



MG

After boom of the 1970s, the Eighties was a bust. The last MGB was built in 1980 with the final example being given to Henry Ford II to sit alongside his father's Midget in the company museum. Back home, MG was relegated to badge engineering, its once-proud octagonal logo adorning warmed-up hatchbacks and family sedans from Austin-Rover. There was one exception, however, in the form of the Group B rally MG Metro 6R4. Sadly, it was somewhat unreliable and arrived too late to make much of an impact in the World Championship.

1990s



MG

Resurrection and redemption were the keywords for the MG of the 1990s. Now part of the Rover Group, the company issued a run of almost 2000 MGB V-8s with engines provided by Land Rover. That was just a teaser to revive interest in the brand as, in 1995, the roadster returned. The MGF was mid-engined and fun to drive, but the Rover Group's owners BMW, elected not to bring it to the U.S., even though it was the U.K.'s best-selling sports car.

2000s



MG

BMW quickly lost interest in the Rover Group, off-loading it to the British-backed Phoenix consortium. The badge continued to adorn assorted racier Rover products, and the F got a facelift, but the honeymoon didn't last, with the firm going bust in 2005. China's Nanjing Automobile Corporation stepped in, buying up what was left of MG and Rover and moving assembly lines east.

2010s

MG changed hands again in 2007 when state-owned SAIC bought Nanjing. Then, 2011 brought the first new MG since 1995 in the shape of the rather sedate MG6 sedan. It was followed by the MG3 hatchback and a new era of budget MG motoring was ushered in.

2020s

There's no doubt that SAIC has achieved an impressive turnaround with this strategy. In 2021 the company sold half a million models worldwide and MGs are now in the top ten sales charts of 20 countries around the world. This success has prompted a huge investment in electrification, and its MG4 has won a slew of awards thanks to its keen pricing and respectable range. What's most exciting, however, is that the huge uptick in sales and spending on technology means that a new MG roadster, the Cyberster, will be on sale in 2024. Could it mark the brand's return to America? We hope so.



I'VE ALWAYS WANTED TO USE THE GRAPHIC TO THE LEFT.

Most of us know Abingdon Spares and perhaps its owner Ed Cooke. Abingdon, along with Dom Cullen of the engineering firm *A Degree of Freedom* have joined MGVR as sponsors of our 100th celebration.

We are very grateful for their help. Much of what we are bringing to you is because of them.

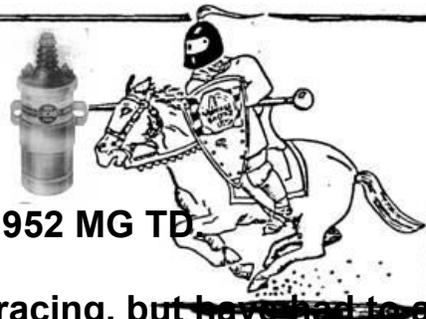
From Ed Cooke – Abingdon Spares

I would like to offer my 1948 MG YA, formerly Al Moss's car, for display. The Y type is the ancestor of the TD, one of the most common MG vintage racers, lending its chassis (shortened) and its IFS. Just a thought.



To All Of You With Significant MG's. We need you to be like Ed and let us know about your car and to start planning on having it shown to hundreds of MG owners and thousands of vintage car fans. Please email me to get details on how your car can be part of the concours and the show.

For Sale



This is an advertisement to sell my 1952 MG TD

I began to prepare the MG for vintage racing, but ~~have had to~~ abandon the project for health reasons. The car is almost totally apart, with just the tub on frame and an early MGA rear axle in place. I have the MGA front suspension and larger brakes, and rebuilt shocks. The roll bar was fashioned by Brown's shop in Louisville. Very little rust, or rot. I have Harley cycle fenders, as well as sound originals. Nearly new 60 spoke wheels for the MGA hubs and deep treaded, but old, Dunlops for testing. All machine work has been done on engine. Custom long rods and matching pistons, for 10:1. The new Crower cam was the hot item, ten years ago. Plastic bucket seats and covers and original seat are there. HANS device and transponder from my Spridget racing may be included. The car is located in central Kentucky. I'm thinking \$11,000.



Email prewitt.ben@gmail.com
Ben Prewitt
Midway, Kentucky
502-330-2215



MG Cape Centres event held in Prince Albert, Cape, South Africa.

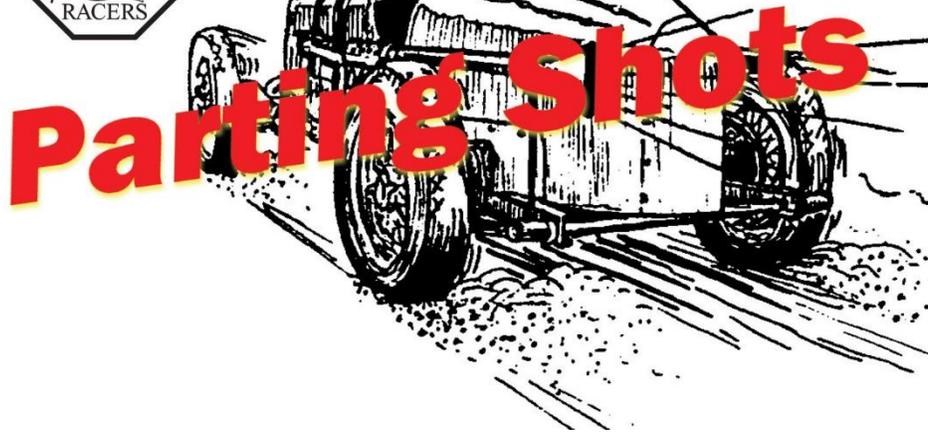


From our South African MG racers, a photo of the legendary, and we think still living, Norm Ewing cutting the celebration cake



From Peter Leyland, a shot of the Silverstone 100th celebration
Unfortunately, we don't have the ID on the cars
but what a wonderful photo.

Who knows how many people reading this have race car projects, not finished. I know I have one. If you are thinking of joining those silly enough to go and thrash our steeds, here is your primer.



What you need to know before buying a classic car with period racing history



By Carl Heideman

May 2, 2023 | [Vintage Racing](#), [race car](#), [Classic Car](#), [Vintage Race Car](#), [Classic Race Car](#) |

Posted in [Buyer's Guides](#), [Features](#) | From the May 2023 issue | [Never miss an article](#)

Maybe there's a little Walter Mitty in all of us. Each time we see a race car, we think that perhaps we should actually own one: big tires, loud pipes, maybe some meatballs on the sides.

But buying a race car is tricky—probably trickier than buying the average classic. Looking to take that leap? Let's go shopping and see if it's time to live out those fantasies.

But first, what are you going to do with your car? Are you actually going to race it? Do you want to take it to car shows? Maybe even drive it on the street from time to time? Or just look at it in your garage or shop?

And why do you want to do these things with a race car instead of a restored or restomodded classic?

Depending on your answers, you may well have a different path to the finish line.

If You're Going to Race It

If racing is your plan, it's better to buy a winner or a project car than a valuable, historic car that you may harm. Even though a winning car should be race-ready, don't expect it to be, and plan for some sorting and remediation—and, likely, a full disassembly, inspection and refurbishment.

Another big question: Who do you plan to race with? Vintage racing is composed of many different communities—typically regional ones—and there’s a directory at the end of this piece.

How many cars do they put on track together? And will those cars be well matched to yours? Some groups send out relatively small packs, so you may end up racing against your best lap time instead of against other drivers.

Other groups, like Formula Vee, can often see large packs, so you’ll generally have someone to race with whether you’re running up front, mid-pack or even near the back.

Check the rules of the sanctioning body, too. What work will be needed to make your car legal, safe and competitive?

Some groups are more forgiving than others regarding upgrades and appearances, and almost all have stricter safety rules today than those that existed years ago. Budget the time and money it will take to prep the car, and factor that into the price you’re willing to pay.

Don’t forget about the logistics of racing. Do you plan to prep, tow and maintain your car at the track? If so, you’ll find you’re as much a truck driver and a camper as you are a racer.

If not, make sure to talk with as many shops as you can to find one that can prep, deliver and support your car at the track. See if they know how to properly support you and your dream car,

make sure they’re insured properly, and check references.

Now, finally, you can think about buying a car. Take your time. The race car market can be fairly limited, with cars often taking months or longer to sell.



If you're looking for a race-ready car, start visiting some events. Not only can you check out the communities, the run groups and the cars, but you'll find quite a few machines listed for sale. You might make a new friend who can help, too.

Then there are the other sources with a car for sale. Plan to travel, and don't expect a lengthy test drive unless it's a pretty mild car that can run on the street. Inspect the car thoroughly and try to get as much history as possible. Ask about spares and try to get all of them. Race cars break at the track, after all, so those spares will be very handy.

How is the safety equipment? Is it expired or heading that way? And can you have a trusted shop do a deeper inspection? Always check against the rule book you brought along.

Fell in love and brought home that new car? Now it's time to disassemble, inspect and refurbish. You can do this yourself or farm it out.

First, trust nothing. Find the weak points, get things crack checked, and inspect all the wear items. Plan on dyno testing the shocks and maybe even rebuilding or simply replacing them. Budget for a full setup with corner weighing, four-wheel alignment, and maybe even a trip to the chassis dyno to touch up the tune.

Remember the wiring, too. Do you want a 75-cent butt connector to park your car on the side of the track after you've paid \$600 to enter an event, towed across a few states, and rented a room?

Once the car is ready, set up your trailer, tow rig and spares for easy race weekends. Organize your spare parts in well-labeled containers, have your tools conveniently and logically stored in their toolbox, and bring some chairs, maybe a tent, and the type of food that keeps you hydrated and healthy.

[*\[10 Tips To Prepare for a Great Vintage Race Season\]*](#)

Of course, we're assuming you've raced before, too. If not, plan on attending the appropriate school to satisfy any licensing requirements. Consider additional driving instruction to keep you safe and fast on track.

Whew! That's a lot more work than taking a car to a car show. Not sure you're up for that? Keep reading.

If You're Not Going to Race It

If you're not planning to race your car, there's less work to do. But we still advise following many of the same steps, as that will help a future owner put the car back on track, preserving your investment.

[*\[How to prepare a car for its first concours\]*](#)