



# NEWSLETTER

**Vol 39 #10    Nov 2021**



# **From The Editor :**

**We truly hope your Thanksgiving was good and the celebration was the beginning of a wonderful Holiday season. Top down, chilly air, going to the final races of the season. As many of us are “experienced” these times of year bring back memories of the fall seasons of long ago. I hope those memories were pleasant.**

**We have a few fun items for this issue. Most of all is the anticipation of the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary edition that will come in December. We’ve asked all of you to send in stories and photos of your favorite MGVR experiences. Because this is no longer a print newsletter we have tons of space for everyone’s tales of yore. No print or paper costs. So get busy and send me some stuff.**

**Our broken axle survey got great response and the irrepressible Dave Smith will be writing his analysis of dozens of breaks over the years sometime in 2022.**

**No need to wait for words of wisdom from Dave as he advises us on how to store our precious race cars for the winter.**

**A borrowed story from Enjoying MG all about a special brew of MG’s from down under in Australia written by Bob Campbell.**

**A retrospective about perhaps the most famous MGA of all time, #029, by David Cathers.**

**A few interesting items for sale including a well known and quick racing Midget, an MG F, a TD Rollbar and a tow vehicle.**

**SEND THOSE STORIES AND PHOTOS – WE REALLY WANT TO KNOW !**



#### FLUIDS:

- Drain coolant and substitute antifreeze. This will keep the coolant pump seal lubricated. Run engine to circulate the product.
- Drain Accusump and Engine, Oil cooler if possible. Add fresh oil.
- Brake & Clutch fluid change to remove any absorbed water in old fluid.
- Transmission & Differential Fluid should be topped off. Change is optional.
- Fuel Cell Liner will be better if stored dry. Lower product in the cell.
- Fuel pump & Carburation may benefit from Stabilizer product.

#### BODY:

- Wash exterior and coat with wax to protect stickers & Numbers.
- Any leather interior should have leather protectant applied.
- If mice could be present, use chemical or electronic repellants.
- Clean engine Bay and underbody to keep oil from staining surfaces.

#### BATTERY:

- Both AGM and Lead Acid batteries would benefit from at least one discharge and recharge over the storage period. If not possible, ensure the battery is fully charged before storage. If possible, a battery minder is a good choice. There are many on the market to choose from.

#### MISCELLANEOUS:

- Check into storage insurance such as Haggerty.
- Race tyres are best stored in a dark & cool place in a sealed bag. Can the car be stored on alternate tyres or on jack stands.
- Inspect the storage location for any possibility of items falling or tipping onto the car. Eliminate these risks.
- Flooding: Check with your storage location manager for any history of water entering the storage building. This winter is predicted to have heavier than usual precipitation. Storage insurance may not cover water damage.

# **“This Car Comes with a Lot of People”**

By David Cathers

On April 9, 1957, an MGA 1500 roadster, chassis number HDT43/28939, rolled off the production line at MG's Abington factory. It was painted one of the firm's standard colors, Tyrolite Green, a hue that few people seem to like and that was evidently phased out in the early months of 1958. [Many MGA facts in this article are drawn from Anders Clausagers' invaluable book, *Original MGA*.] Still, it would have been a pretty car, with a blue top and matching blue tonneau cover, and wire wheels. Its modest list of options included an adjustable steering column, windshield washers, and a heater. Dispatched to the United States on April 12, it was one among the 13,869 MGAs making the trip that year. In the US, Edwin E. “Spankey” Smith of Binghamton, NY, is said to have bought the car new from Morris Garage, Gordie Morris's famous dealership in Maryland, NY. Right after Spankey brought the car home, Joe Tierno, a sixteen-year-old boy from the neighborhood excitedly rode his bike to Smith's house to see it. The new car had begun attracting its people.

Like most of the MGAs exported to the US, this one had an unremarkable beginning. But it has had a remarkable career that continues to this day, and also a memorable succession of owners and drivers. As its current owner, Chris Meyers, said to me the first time we spoke: “This car comes with a lot of people.” This article comes with a lot of people, too, and my thanks go to Mark Barnhart, Mark Bucher, Donna and Hugh Francis, Chris Meyers, Dave Nicholas, Ted Rounds, and Joe Tierno. Also, a special thank you to Michael Aikey.

In 1957, Spankey Smith was a thirty-two-year-old car guy. He had owned a succession of cars before buying this new MGA: among them a Mercury lead sled with lake pipes, an Austin-Healey 100-4, a Porsche 356, and a Triumph, model unknown. He had also earlier owned another MGA. This was the black roadster raced by driver George Valentine at Watkins Glen in 1956, the first year MGAs were brought to the US in quantity. It seems to be a little-known fact that Spankey's famous 1957 roadster, the subject of this article, was his second MGA.

At some point, probably soon after he bought it, he gave his new car a slightly custom appearance. As Joe Tierno told me, “Spankey was a hot rodder. He loved custom work.”

And so he had a local body shop remove the stock tail lights from the rear wings and install a pair of Morris MinoTraveler tail lights on the body panel below the trunk lid. With this change Spankey presciently anticipated by about five years the tail light position – although neither the shape or size -- of the later 1600 Mark II, although in fact he is said to have made this change to evoke the mid-1950s D Type Jaguar





The changes he made that year to get more speed out of the car remain a matter of speculation. According to Joe Tierno, racing sports cars of the era ran essentially stock. In his semi-serious but apparently accurate formulation: "Drive to track, add numbers, remove windshield, insert driver, race, drive home." However, Spankey Smith wanted this car to be competitive, and during the summer of 1957 it apparently spent time in the shop at Morris Garage with driver / tuner

Sherm Decker working his subtle magic. For instance, he might have polished the cylinder head and ports, perhaps added a hotter cam, and, according to veteran racer Ted Rounds, Decker installed the 9.0:1 flat-top pistons that the factory made available to owners who raced their cars. Otherwise, as Rounds recalls, "there was not a lot of race prep." Hugh Francis, who joined Morris Garage in 1957 and continues to work on MGAs, suggests that Decker would probably have smoothed the valve stems and guides, aligned the front end, and tuned the stock 48-spoke wire wheels, assuring they were tight. Whatever may or may not have been done to make the car go faster, certainly *something* was done: a "Competition Tuned by Morris Garage" plaque soon adorned its dashboard. Stopping power remained unchanged: Spankey's new racer relied on its stock drum brakes.

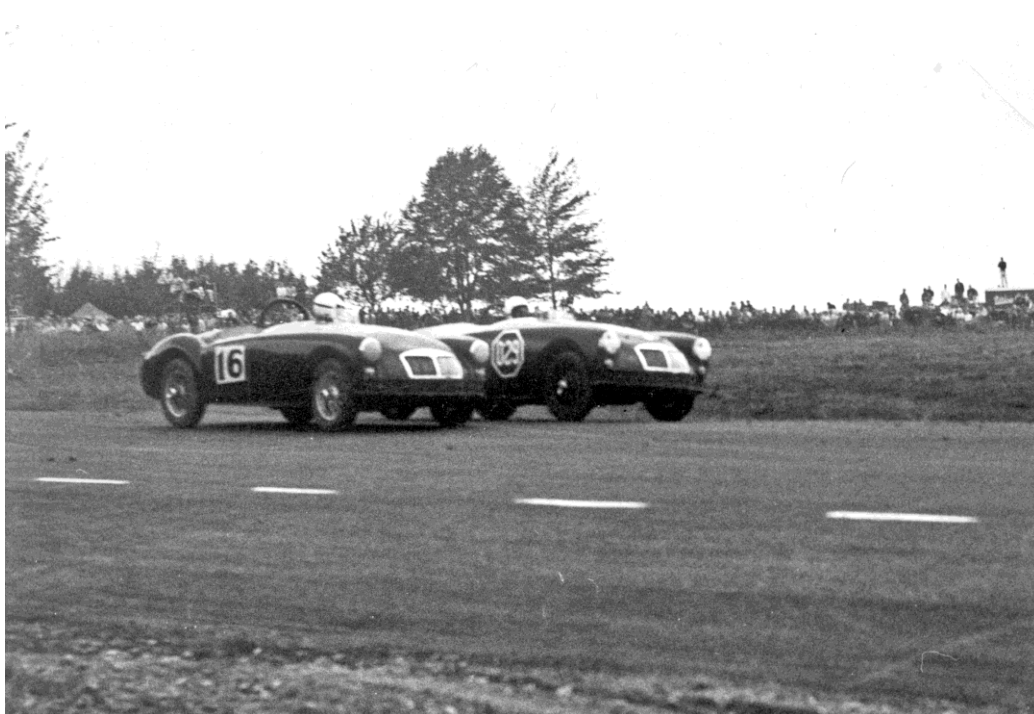
Ted Rounds raced his 1957 ex-Sebring MGA 1500 against this car three times in 1959, losing to it twice but leading it home once, at Berwick, Pennsylvania on August 1, 1959. Rounds recalls that Spankey "was beside himself" after the loss, and, intent on going faster, the ever-competitive Spankey took the car back to Morris Garage to have the 9.0:1 pistons replaced with factory-supplied raised-top pistons, increasing the compression ratio to 10.1:1. Rounds suggests, however, that he may have bested #029 on that particular day because his Goodyear Blue Streaks gripped the track surface better than the Michelins Bucher was running.

Whatever was done to enhance the car's speed, little was done to make it safer. For instance, surviving photographs show that it didn't have a roll bar during the 1957 season. That came later, in 1958 and '59, when roll bars were required. In their book *John Thornley said "Call it MGA,"* Piers Hubbard and Roger Martin report that #029's roll bar was made of electrical conduit, lightweight but flimsy. For his own car, Ted Rounds constructed a similarly cosmetic roll bar of bent exhaust pipe attached to the chassis with muffler clips. Thinking back to that racing season sixty-two years ago,

Rounds muses, "It might have helped some." Spankey's roadster likely acquired seat belts at some point in its three-season racing career, but otherwise, according to Joe Tierno, it had no safety equipment whatsoever.

Smith is thought to have bought this new MGA with racing in mind, and on September 21, 1957 his friend and near neighbor Bob Bucher drove the five-month-old car in its first race. Bucher was already an established race car driver, and during 1957 he regularly campaigned his Allard JR – according to his son Mark, his dad's favorite race car. With number 029 now painted on its flanks, and racing under Smith and Bucher's "Jake's Stable" banner, Spankey's MGA 1500 won in its first outing, and it was an important one. As *the Binghamton Press and Sun-Bulletin* reported the following day, Bucher had first driven his Allard to victory in the September 21 Seneca Cup race at Watkins Glen, and then "came right back in the 11-lap Collier Brothers Memorial race with a 69.4 m.p.h. winning effort in an MGA."

Bucher continued to race #029 in the 1958 and 1959 seasons, with wins at Thompson, Lime Rock, and Watkins Glen, and perhaps his best-known win was his eked-out triumph over Sherm Decker in the 1958 Collier Brothers Memorial race, an event recounted in "The Closet Collier Cup Race in History," published by NAMGAR in 2014. According to "MG Thriller Sparks Glen Grand Prix Races," the report published by *The Elmira Star-Gazette* on September 20, 1958: "Bucher won a thrilling duel with Sherman Decker of Oneonta.... Bucher and Decker raced wheel to wheel in the final two laps of the event.



Each led at various points of the race, but Bucher caught Decker on the 10<sup>th</sup> lap and matched him to a bumping battle in the final turn that put Bucher a half-length ahead at the finish." At some point later in the 1958 season Bucher may have crashed #029, and Dave Nicholas theorizes that Bucher damaged the car enough to require bodywork and

repainting. Seizing this chance to enhance his car's looks, Spankey replaced the factory Tyrolite Green with the British Racing Green that the car retains to this day. Bucher was the Hambro Cup winner at Watkins Glen on August 23, 1959, with Rounds

coming second. Bucher's final race in #029 was the 1959 Collier Cup on September 26, with Decker winning and Bucher a DNF.

At the end of that season, Spankey Smith took this car off the track and fitted an aftermarket hardtop; it became his road car for the remaining twenty-six years of his life. During those years he shared #029 with another Bucher, lending it to Bob's son Mark in the summer, with the understanding that Mark could drive it as his own for a month or so, but with the requirement that he'd detail it to Spankey's satisfaction. By 1987 the car's BRG exterior still looked quite respectable: Bob Bucher's trademark, the Jake's Stable sticker, remained on its flanks, and the "Competition Tuned by Morris Garage" plaque was still affixed to the dash. The underside had the kind of deterioration that you'd expect on any MGA that had gone through thirty years of New York State winters, but despite the wear and the rust, Joe Tierno, who had known the car since new and had remained Spankey's friend, was determined to buy it.

In June 1987, he wrote to the Smith family "to inquire into the future of Spankey's MG. If at some time it becomes available for sale, I would appreciate the opportunity to buy it. My plan would be to restore it to the same condition as when Spank and Bob Bucher were a team. I would like to campaign it using Spankey's number, 029." Shortly after writing this letter, and three decades after first seeing the car, #029 was his.

Although it had spent years as a road car, Joe wanted it to be purely a race car, a beautiful one. He undertook a body-off restoration, and treated #029 to a rich new coat of British Racing Green. He gave the interior a period-correct updating, although he did add a non-period-correct Sparco racing seat. The Vintage Drivers Association of America stresses that "Authenticity and appearance of the cars is much more important than their speed potential," and the resurrection of #029 was wholly sympathetic to that aim. (Do drivers hold this thought when they're on the track?) Tierno also had the very good fortune of being able to discuss the car with its original mechanic, Sherm Decker: "I called Sherm after I bought the car and there were no secrets. Modifications, no, attention to detail, yes. Expert work is what [he] did." But eventually wanting more power than he could get from the car's 1500 cc engine, he replaced it with a race-tuned 1622 cc engine, built by Kent Prather.

Most of the changes he made to the car were in the interest of safety. He deleted the tonneau cover -- a potential fire hazard -- and replaced the wood floor with aluminum, again for safety from fire as well protection from the driveshaft. He added a smaller, removeable steering wheel, also for safety. He installed front disc brakes and stronger front spindles, a dual master cylinder, 72-spoke wire wheels, and a fuel cell. The Sparco racing seat and four-point harness were of course meant for safety, too. And #029 acquired a roll bar strong enough to actually protect the driver. The car was now a vintage racer, and by this time racing was no longer the "minimal safety equipment" and "drive to track, remove windshield, insert driver" sport it had earlier been. In its new guise it raced for twenty seasons, running at mid-Ohio, Sebring, Road Atlanta, Watkins

Glen, and winning the Collier Vintage Cup at the Glen, Joe Tierno driving. One year at the Glen the car attracted even more people, a volunteer pit crew made up of Mark Barnhart and several of his Michigan Rowdies friends. Joe recalls, "They saved me many times."

Sebring 2007: Joe Tierno at speed. Courtesy Joe Tierno



By 2009, after owning the car for twenty-one years, Joe decided it was time to sell. But conscious of the car's storied past, he advertised it saying, "This is one of those cars that we really hope goes to the right owner. We wish it could be passed on to a local buyer who will keep it on track at Watkins Glen and will maintain it in its current state." As third owner Chris Meyers tells it, he became one of #029's people because of its history and "the unbelievable collection of stuff" that Joe had kept together over the decades. As those who have seen the car at vintage racing events know, it is a rolling history lesson, bearing tokens of a competition history going back sixty-four years: for instance, a dashboard plaque commemorating the 1957 Collier Cup win; a 1957 SCCA plaque from Watkins Glen; two Morris Garage plaques; the 1959 Hambro Cup plaque; and Jake's Stable stickers on both doors. The "stuff" also includes the original badge bar, and several examples of intriguing paper ephemera: a pit pass penciled "029" and a tech inspection sticker, both from the Glen in 1957, and another pit pass, from



Montgomery, signed by Spankey Smith. The Nuvolari turtle affixed to the dashboard is a more recent Chris Meyers addition, as is the self-explanatory name that he has given the car: "Spankey."

Chris won NAMGAR's Bob Bucher – Sherm Decker Memorial Cup in 2009, the year he bought the car, running it essentially as he had bought it from Joe Tierno. A few years later, in pursuit of more speed but also reliability, he put in a new 1622 cc. engine, tuned the suspension, lightened the car, and, his wry humor coming through, "made some body modifications on the track."

"Spankey" at Lime Rock, the track Chris Meyers calls his "home track." Note the alloy wheels. Courtesy Chris Meyers



#029 is that rare race car that was first put on the track in 1957 and is still a race car today. It is well-known to NAMGAR members, a four-time winner of NAMGAR's Bucher / Decker trophy. Its storied history includes many people: first owned by the vividly remembered Spankey Smith, and raced by the legendary Bucher against the legendary Decker. And over the years #029 has involved many others, among them

its second and third owners, Joe Tierno and Chris Meyers, as well as all of the BARCboys, their spouses and countless friends, and others I've named in this article.

But this is not simply a story steeped in nostalgia. If #029 is a mobile history lesson it is also very much a competitive vintage race car. It's also a work in progress. Chris is now giving Spankey a new engine, and as he explained to me, "It is a 1622 block bored .20 over. It has a Moldex crank, Pauter forged rods, JE forged pistons, and a flowed cylinder head. Its compression is probably around 11:1" He has already put in a new transmission and installed close ratio gears, and pragmatically replaced the good-looking 72-spoke wire wheels with alloy wheels, "because they don't break." Chris plans to keep #029 fully competitive, and as he worked on this racer in his garage on a warm April day, he turned to me and said, "I need to get my car done."

## THE END



# 2022 IS COMING – START PLANNING NOW

It is with great pleasure that we at MGVR and VARAC are announcing the 2022 Focus Event at VARAC's Vintage Grand Prix at Canadian Tire Motorsport Park (CTMP) Mosport Grand Prix circuit June 16-19 , 2022. Mark your calendar & make plans to join us!

For those of you who don't know, Canadian Tire Motorsport Park is just north of Bowmanville ON. Formerly known as Mosport, it is a great world class track and was home to all the classic series from "the day" such as F1, Can-Am, F5000, USAC Indy cars & stock cars and was run by all the racing greats of that period. It is truly a racing hallowed ground, come and soak it in!

Not only do we have a great 4 days on an iconic track but this event kicks off the North American MG meet, MG 2022, in Peterborough, ON which is just down the road. This event is Sunday PM through Thurs, commencing after racing on Sunday, Race cars are very welcome. See link for more details. <https://mgtoronto.com/mg2022/>.

The Focus Event at the VGP is just one of two MGVR's planned focus events for '22- you'll be hearing from Manley about another event at Put-in-Bay in the fall. Why not attend both?

The VARAC Vintage Grand Prix boasts lots of track time and exciting racing during the day and social events every night; it's an event that keeps people coming back year after year.

Registration will be open soon. I will keep you advised. In the meantime, mark your calendars and plan to be there. It's going to be a great event!

Contact me with any questions or concerns.

Dave Good [davewgood@yahoo.ca](mailto:davewgood@yahoo.ca)

## PLUS – ANOTHER FOCUS RACE



**Put-in-Bay 2022: Sept. 20-23; MGVR "Focus Event"**  
**Featuring MG (and Triumph, too)**

It's official: In the planning stages since 2019, the 2022 Put-in-Bay Vintage Sports Car Races this week will be officially announcing that our 2022 event will take place Tuesday September 20<sup>th</sup> to Friday September 23) AND that the event is an official "MG Vintage Racers Focus Event."

As most MG Vintage Racers should be aware, the Put-in-Bay Sports Car Races take place on Ohio's South Bass Island where small-bore sports cars raced through the



streets of the village of Put-in-Bay from 1952 to 1959 and one last time in 1963. The modern-day event began in 2009 with a modest “reunion.” Then came real racing in 2012, so today’s Put-in-Bay Vintage Sports Car Races take place on a challenging 1.2 mile hay bale-lined course at the island’s airport.

Featured marques for the 2022 event will be MG and Triumph, so I’m hopeful MG drivers from far and wide will make a special effort to come and enjoy the “Holy grail of old school vintage sports car racing.”

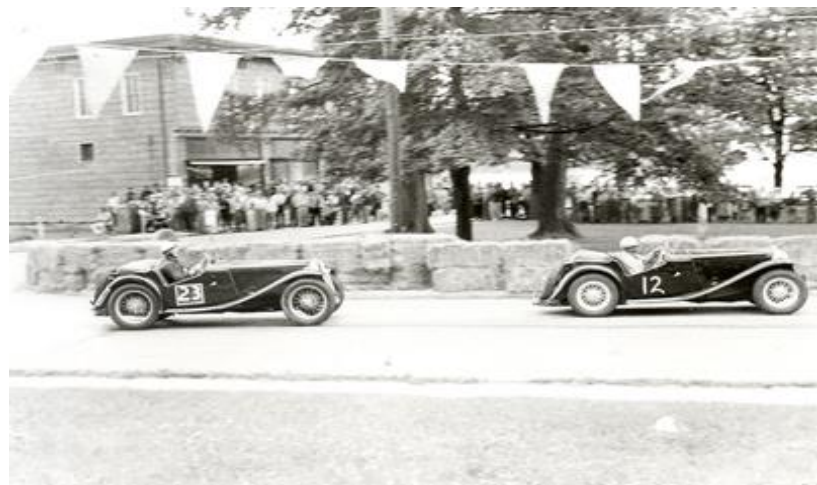
2022 will mark 70 years since that first Put-in-Bay Road Race back in the fall of 1952 when most of the entries were MG TCs and TDs. One could make the case that were it not for the strong U.S. sales of T-Series MGs in those days that the Put-in-Bay Road Races might never have happened in the first place. Then by the mid-‘50s Triumph TR2s and TR3s became the preferred British entry, dominating E production, so it just made sense to add the TRs into the mix for 2022.

Following the event’s traditional pattern, Tuesday September 20 will comprise an all-entrant’s car show and tours of the original 3.1 mile road course, then racing will take place on Wednesday and Thursday the 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> at the Put-in-Bay Airport. Mixed in are numerous social gatherings and the not-to-be missed “rocker cover races”.

Put-in-Bay is unique in vintage racing for attracting both racing- and non-racing entries, so all entrants can expect a rousing turn-out of MGs. In addition, we will be making a special effort to reach out and bring back MGs that raced on the island back in the day (Marv Primack and his Lester MG, Ben Bragg and his too-long in restoration Kieft MG, for example), as well as to attract other MGs with meaningful race history.

Look for registration to open in early January 2022. More info @ [www.pibroadrace.com](http://www.pibroadrace.com)

Octagonally,  
Manley Ford, Event Coordinator Put-in-Bay Road Races Heritage Society





Australia is a long way from the centres of progress in international motorsport. One result of this isolation has been the creation of sundry specials, a development that began in the 1920s and continues to the present day.

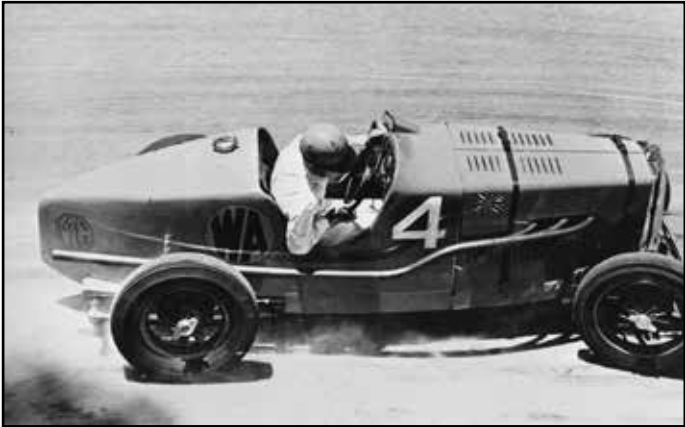
Many specials were the result of a lack of resources to maintain and repair complex European racing engines. If a highly tuned racing power unit blew up it was often easier to replace it with a larger and easily maintained engine, usually from an American car. Others started from scratch or at least with a chassis from a relatively light production car from which they built up a special using available parts to achieve a high power-to-weight ratio. Such cars could be very quick, but there were probably many more that never achieved the hoped-for performance.

One point of departure was to take a roadgoing sports car and develop it into a competitive racer. Sometimes this involved a change of engine but in the case of MG-based specials there was a great deal of information available to assist in squeezing more power from the original unit. The first MG special to be entered in the Australian Grand Prix was the MG Magna of Les Jennings, which was raced in the 1933 event at Phillip Island in Victoria. This was the start of something big with MG specials. MGs of various descriptions won the AGP in 1935, 1937, 1939 and 1947 and there were MGs in the AGP entry list until 1955.

Some of the MG entries in the AGP were real specials, such as the Vauxhall-powered cars in the 1950 and 1951 events and Owen Bailey's Holden-powered MG in the 1954 and 1955 races. In some cases most of the entries in the Grand Prix and certainly the majority of the competitive cars were MGs.

More recently, MG specials have been built in Western Australia to be run in the Vintage Sports Car Club of WA regularity events, and thanks go to their owners for their assistance as well as to the members of the VSCC of WA. Meanwhile, Dick Willis was an unfailing source of information about the eastern-seaboard cars.

**Alan Tomlinson's supercharged MG TA**  
The 1939 Australian Grand Prix was held over a distance of 150 miles over 17 laps of a street circuit at Lobethal in South Australia. The biggest surprise of the day was that the event was won by Alan Tomlinson, a young driver from Western Australia in a supercharged MG TA. His winning time was 1 hour 50 minutes and 57 seconds – not the fastest time, because until the early 1950s the AGP was a handicap race. Tomlinson is to date the only Western Australian winner of the AGP.



Alan Tomlinson in his TA-based racer, at Lobethal in 1939

Tomlinson crosses the Finish line at Lobethal, winner of the '39 Australian GP



Racing specials in Australia have often been MG-based. **Bob Campbell** of the VSCC of Western Australia looks at eight of the best

# SPECIAL BREW

His crew were probably the least surprised people at Lobethal that weekend: after careful preparation of the car, Tomlinson had arrived three weeks before the event so that he could learn the circuit and how his car coped with it. The effort paid off. Tomlinson's lap times indicated that he was reaching a speed of just over 140mph at some points on the circuit, a feat considered impossible by experts of the day.

The TA had a neat lightweight aluminium body and the engine had been bored out to 1340cc. Much modified, it was fitted with a Roots-type Marshal supercharger. A range of differential ratios was available and the tallest of these, with 6.50x16 rear tyres, gave a theoretical top speed of around 130mph, which was a little conservative considering the car's performance in the race.

In 1940, Tomlinson returned to Lobethal but crashed, with extensive damage to both car and driver. The crash ended his race career. The car was sold in damaged condition and returned to the circuits after World War II. Like many another racing car, it was further modified until by 1952 only the chassis and wheels remained of the original car. By the mid 1970s it had a Holden engine and front suspension, but there were plans to restore it to 1939 specification and appearance. Nothing came of those plans and the whereabouts of the car is unknown.



The Kleinig Hudson at Bathurst in 1939; latterly the Hudson engine had a Kleinig-made head and four Amal carbs



Noel Aldous in the Healey-powered Milano –  
100-odd horsepower in a TC chassis...



Les Wheeler in  
the Stewart-  
MG that he  
commissioned



### Kleinig Hudson Special

The basis of the Kleinig Hudson Special was an MG Magna L-type tourer previously owned by John Sherwood, a noted Australian racing driver, speedway promoter and businessman who was later President of the Royal Automobile Club of Australia. The MG had been rebodied as a saloon for wealthy cinema operator Gus McIntyre, who himself competed in a modified Hudson drophead. But the well-built McIntyre and his wife found the car too tight a squeeze, so the body was removed and mechanic Frank Kleinig was commissioned by McIntyre to build a bespoke racing machine.

By 1935 Kleinig had transformed the MG into the Kirby-Deering Special, so-named because he constructed the car when working at the James N Kirby engine shop in Sydney, with backing from the owner of a company called Deering Engineering. The underslung Magna chassis was fitted with front and back axles from a [four-cylinder French Mathis car](#), complete with huge Mathis drum brakes. The chassis was crab-tracked, being several inches wider in the front than in the back.

Initially a 1½-litre straight-eight Miller engine was used, mated to a three-speed Mathis gearbox. The combination worked well at the Penrith Speedway, where the car was virtually unbeatable. But the complex twin-cam Miller unit struggled with the standing starts and varied corners of road courses, so for the 1938 AGP at Bathurst the Kirby-Deering Special was given a 4168cc Hudson straight-eight – big, simple and reliable.

After the 1938 AGP, the brakes were upgraded with front drums from a Minerva and the springs were modified to cope with the weight and torque of the Hudson engine.

During 1939 ownership passed to Kleinig and the car became known as the the Kleinig Hudson Special. It was one of the two scratch starters in the 1939 Australian Grand Prix, held on the fast and daunting Lobethal road circuit, but like all of the big cars it fried its tyres in the incredibly hot conditions – and then only lasted three laps before going out with overheating.

The Royal Blue special raced on until the late fifties, latterly with Peugeot 203 independent front suspension fitted to the MG chassis, and remained with the Kleinig family after Frank's death in 1976 until it was bought in 1992 by current owner Tom Roberts. The car has been restored to its early 1950s configuration and is still raced regularly at historic events.

### McMahon MG Y-type

Kevin McMahon's MG Y-type special was built for regularity events run by the Vintage Sports Car Club of Western Australia. The XPAG engine has been set back 50cm (some 20in) to improve weight distribution and the mixture is pumped in by a Roots blower. The Y-type axle is located by the standard leaf springs and a Panhard rod. The body was inspired by the MG K3 Magnette and built by McMahon with professional help on items such as the radiator grille.

The special doesn't qualify for a Motorsport Australia historic logbook: taking advantage of the front suspension being shared with later MGs, it has upgraded brakes, along with other updates to improve safety and reliability. The car has provided a lot of fun on the various circuits used by the VSCC of WA. Unfortunately, the onset of eye trouble has meant that McMahon can no longer drive, but he is keeping the MG for his daughter.





*John Davies enjoying the TC-based Profilio-MG single-seater*

### Phil Franzone's Singer-MG

Built in Western Australia to be run in the Vintage Sports Car Club of WA regularity events, this one is a bitzer. There is a lot of MG in it, but the chassis comes from a Singer. The engine and gearbox are from an MGA 1600 MkII, however, and probably the rear axle too. It is listed as a 1955 MG Special, but that is because the newest major component comes from an MGA, and the MGA came out in 1955. It is a neat-looking car and current owner Phil Franzone has had a lot of fun in it since he acquired it a few years ago from its creator, Barry White.

### Profilio TC single-seater

This beautiful little monoposto started out as a 1949 MG TC, although you would have to look at it closely to spot its parentage. It was raced in standard form by first owner George Pearce before being fitted with a two-seater aluminium racing body and a supercharger.

In 1950 Gary Coghlan bought the car and raced it at Bathurst (New South Wales) and in New Zealand. He fitted the car with an ungainly single-seater body before passing it on in the early 1950s to Frank Dynon, who modified the body to its present form.

Jack Carter was the next owner and he sold the car to Vince Profilio in 1955.

The car became known as the Profilio-MG and was raced extensively and competitively in New South Wales until 1964.

During this time the capacity was increased to 1466cc from the standard 1250cc and the car was run on a mixture of methanol and avgas.

Barry Davis paid only \$350 (about £140 at that time) for the car in 1969 but raced it only occasionally before passing it to Noel Thomas, in whose hands it was severely damaged in a multi-car crash. Jack Mayes bought the wreckage less engine in 1975 and in 1988 Percy Hunter bought the still dismantled special and rebuilt it completely.

The car was raced regularly in the eastern states for 30 years until it was sold to John Davies in 2018 and shipped to Western Australia. Davies runs the car in events on both sides of Australia, and points out that it is the only car he has heard of that is log-booked by Motorsport Australia for racing with or without the supercharger.

### MG-Healey Milano

Noel Aldous was one of those who used a JWF Milano body for his MG special. Announced in 1959, the glassfibre Milano body was inspired by the Ferrari Monza and intended principally for the Austin Seven chassis. Soon, however, it was being offered in a variety of dimensions, to suit in addition Morris Eight, Ford, Singer or MG chassis, amongst the more obvious choices.

The Aldous car was built in 1961 using a TC chassis and an Austin-Healey 100 engine. It was never fully developed after Noel Aldous crashed at Claremont Speedway in 1962, breaking both his arms. At 46 years old, he decided enough was enough and retired from racing. The MG-Healey would almost certainly have been successful had it been further developed. It would be nice to know what became of it.

Differently, the author remember reading about a square-rigger MG that was converted using one of these Milano shells. The owner's next race was at Bathurst and the reduction in drag from the streamlined body was such that he gained an enormous amount of speed down Conrod Straight – so much so that he totally misjudged his braking and ended up heading for Bathurst township down the escape road.



*Phil Franzone's Singer-MG special at a 2015 race*



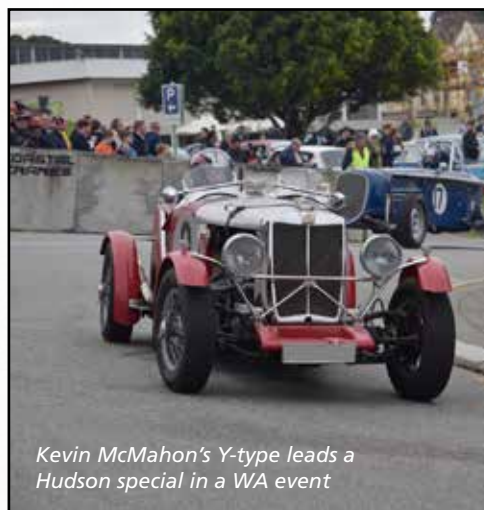


### Mid-engined Stewart-MG

This one is a bit different – a mid-engined TC-based special. Created in the early 1950s, before the use of VW transaxles was common in such cars, it was born of builder Gordon Stewart's determination to use the Nuffield parts he grew up with, hence his unorthodox use of an MG TC driveline.

The mechanicals were originally all MG TC but the front suspension is by Morris Minor torsion bars and at the rear there is a de Dion axle, with drive going through a TC gearbox to a modified TC differential. The original engine was an XPAG from a TC, but after demolishing two TC engines it was fitted in 1957 with a supercharged MGA engine which improved its reliability.

The car was built by Sydney-based Stewart for chemist Les Wheeler, who had Stewart drive the car. Campaigned until 1964, it was a useful performer in hillclimbs but didn't shine in circuit racing. Wheeler re-took possession in the late 1970s and later sold the car to Bernie Leimeister of Queensland. It remained in storage until Dick Willis of Coffs Harbour, New South Wales, bought it in 2007. It has been restored to its 1960 specification and is today raced sparingly in historic events.



Kevin McMahon's Y-type leads a Hudson special in a WA event

### Leer J2 Milano special

A 1933 J2 MG chassis fitted with a modified XPEG engine and a JWF Milano body held the under-1500cc lap record at Warwick Farm in Sydney well into the years when Lotus and Lola sports cars should have been ruling the roost. The car was built by Bruce Leer and Sam Johnson of Manly Vale in New South Wales – Johnson being the 'J' in JWF. It was raced with great success by Leer until he moved up to a Holden-powered Milano.

Like many racing cars it was ignored as years went by until it was found in bits by John Scott in 1978. It was rebuilt and became a class front-runner in historic racing. Western Australian Geoff Herbert bought the Leer Special in 2011 and kept it in Victoria to race it in the state. Mike Gosbell of Coffs Harbour took the car on in 2013 before passing it to his UK-based son, who sold it to current owner Christian Jaeger. So this is one Aussie special that you might see in action without having to travel Down Under. 🇦🇺



The mid-mounted engine is built into a tubular chassis



John Scott in the J2-based Leer/Johnson Milano



The Stewart-MG as it is today, with a remodelled body



**For Sale**



**MG Midget Race Car & Trailer;** Car is Green. Solid chassis w/ almost all new components. Lowered suspension from Moss, brakes new from Moss w/ slotted & drilled rotors. Transmission is standard Midget w/ limited slip differential (Quaife). Solid 1275 block enlarged by '30' w/ Vanolia pistons, full race vintage cam & Weber (45DCOE). Aluminum radiator by Griffin. Also equipped w/ an Accusump. Spare 1275 engine needs some work. Panasport wheels, w/ Hoosiers, A70-13 tyres - two sets. Trailex trailer (all aluminum) model CT7031. 3,100lbs capacity, has electric winch. It is 19.5' long an 94.5" wide. The asking price for both race car & trailer is \$16.000. Contact **Jim Byers @ 703-768-9361 or 703-577-4936** or [byers.j.j@att.net](mailto:byers.j.j@att.net).



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## '73 Ford 650 Race/Show Car Hauler

the best, cheapest and most secure way to haul your car. CAT Diesel engine, 6 speed with high and low gears, so 12 speed, air brakes and air front seats for comfort ride, tailgate and ramps that fold down to load cars, can accept a pickup truck, about 35 ft long, size of two SUV's parked end to end, box part has metal cabinets and custom wood shelving for storage of parts, tools, luggage, etc, 20K lb Winch, recent tubeless tires and new rims, 4 door, radio/tape player, no mechanical problems, GVW of 26K lbs so no commercial license is required. Email for more pictures, [mgtdva@gmail.com](mailto:mgtdva@gmail.com) or call Bob at 508-943-1447, \$5950. to a good home.





## 1999 MGF LE 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary edition for sale

Mark Brandow brought this car in from Germany 15 years ago, platinum silver color, burgundy interior, mid engine, 16 valve, fuel injected, 5 speed, legally licensed in Minnesota. \$25,000 firm.

Mark Brandow [MarkB@quality-coaches.com](mailto:MarkB@quality-coaches.com)

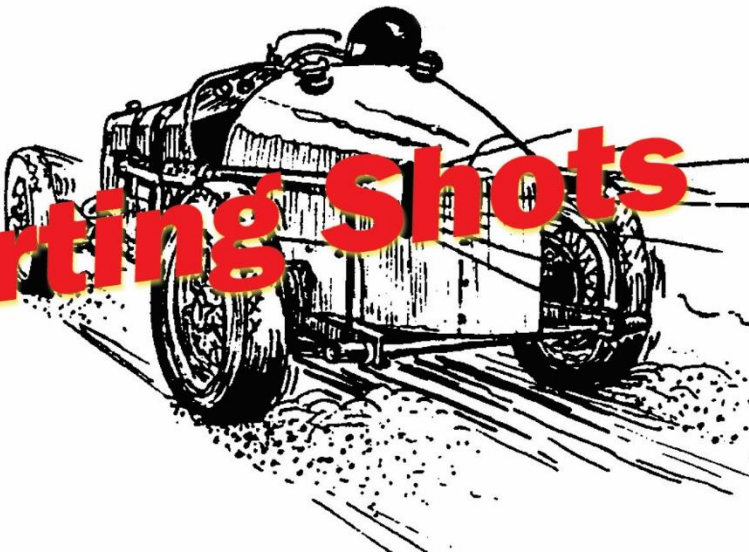
Dick Wallrich [chartbus@me.com](mailto:chartbus@me.com)





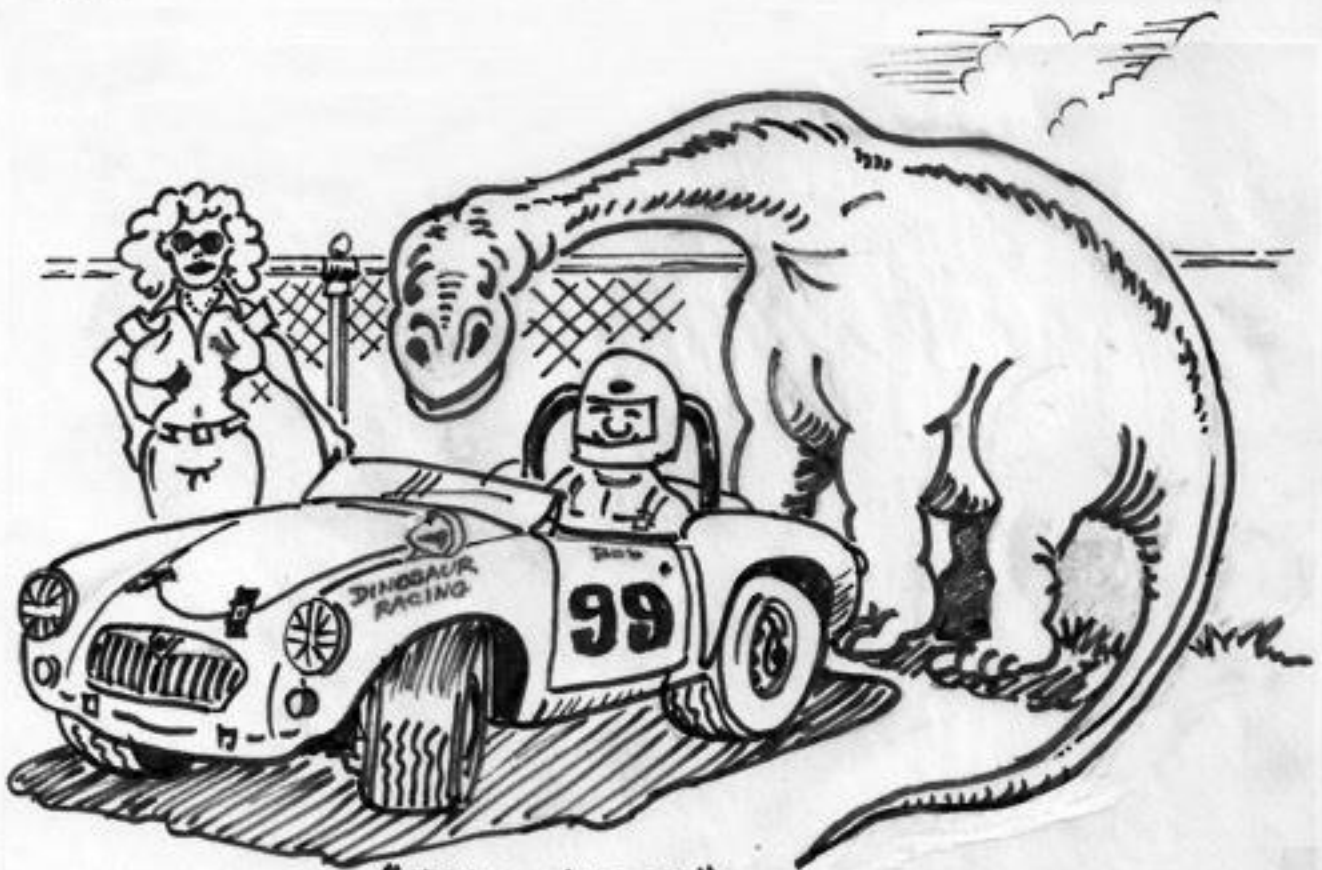


# Parting Shots



We'll close with  
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"TEAM MASCOT"

3-84