

# A Winter Solstice

**Austin Healey Car Club Super  
Sprint & MRA All British Meeting  
Wakefield Park 2014**

THE ABSOLUTE MID winter meeting at Wakefield can always be relied upon to turn on some interesting weather.

We've often had minus five degree mornings with frozen swallow poo all over the cars and no water to thaw or wash it off.

But these frosty mornings usually yield a clear, sunny, beautiful, chilly day. Not so 2014. The sun hardly showed its wan face all weekend.

Heavy scudding clouds that looked to be carrying a good wad of snow were flung low across the sky by a howling gale. The temperature hovered pretty close to zero and the wind chill factor was unbelievable.

After some customarily cursory preparation, like getting the front wheels standing up at the same angle again, we headed off a bit later than usual, which would see us into Goulburn too late to have early scrutineering and leave the car at the track.

At Gundagai *Driver* lost a brief argument with a jerry can whilst getting it out of the Healey to fill and gained a magnificent black eye. *Pit Crew* maintained an enigmatic silence throughout the weekend when questioned on the matter.

With *Driver* suffering from lost sleep earlier in the week and *Pit Crew* suffering from an annoying virus, an early night seemed a good idea. Nice warm cabin with comfy bed and electric blanket made the world a better place.

Usually there is no booking of garages on the Austin Healey Club Super Sprint day (Saturday) and everyone takes pot luck, but a very wise Colin Goldsmith took the precaution of booking garages, not carpports, for the whole group of us. His blood is worth bottling.

Shared our end of the garage with Peter Osborn (Alfa) Colin Goldsmith (3000), John Dowsett/Zach McAfee (100/6) Chris Komor (100/4) Patrick Townsend (100/4) Simon Meyer (MkI Sprite) and Damian Meyer (MG).

By mutual consent all the doors were kept closed except for very quick ingress and egress of competitors.

Our times were wide enough apart that hardly any of us went out with any of the others.

*Pit Crew* was feeling a bit frail and didn't risk the howling blizzard to watch anyone except her own, but as the conditions worsened it became obvious that Colin G and Geoffrey L were loving the wet conditions and the others were hating them.

***At Gundagai Driver  
lost a brief argument  
with a jerry can  
whilst getting it out  
of the Healey to fill,  
and gained a  
magnificent  
black eye.***

Everyone was running three to five seconds slower than their nominated times. Geoff was running with his hood up and wipers going ... just as he did a month before at the FOSSC meeting. In his first run, which was more or less dry, he was really unhappy with the car, she just didn't feel like his old comfy slipper. He was balking a gear change in the same spot on the circuit, the engine was missing under load, he seemed to be sitting too low, she was trying to turn in on him etc etc.

More air pressure in tyres fixed the handling. As he went to put in a borrowed coil to see if that was the miss problem he made the embarrassing discovery that the low tension leads were hanging off his own. (His mechanic needs smacking). The balking gear change was fixed by a tiny alteration in the angle he was sitting. Suddenly the world was an even better place.

More and more competitors dropped out and groups were amalgamated until by 2pm the call was for "anyone in groups ABCDEFGHIJ who would like

another run to the dummy grid now. "Colin was just coming in off the circuit and drove straight back to the dummy grid, so he and Geoff finally got a run together.

The event was all over by 2.30. Can't remember ever feeling so cold. By 3.30 we were home in our nice little warm cabin and laid out on the electric blanket like a pair of sausages on a griddle, sizzling gently. We slept soundly for two hours and were a bit reluctant to get up for dinner. At dinner we discovered just about everyone else had done some version of the same thing with all heating and blankets running flat chat. Dinner was pleasant and the company great as always. Nothing was official but it seems Geoff was fastest Healey for the day with a 1:16 ... somewhat slower than his best time at the track of 1:13, but a pretty big achievement under the circumstances.

Sadly, none of the other Healeys stayed on for the MRA All British Day on



Above: Geoff Leake

Sunday. The weather was, if possible, even worse than Saturday.

John and Jill Dowsett stayed on as moral support, which was great of them.

*Driver* offered to pull the plug and leave early, but at the rate the field was dwindling it seemed the programme would go through to a pretty early finish. He was enjoying himself and *Pit Crew* hadn't dropped dead yet, so it was probably alright.

We did actually pack the car between the last two races for a quick get away, which we have never done before. Second last race the field was down to 11. Damian Meyer in the MG was still running and is much quicker than the Healey, but he was on slicks! How he kept it on the track at all is a miracle. Geoff came third behind him and a gutsy TR7 5.2-litre V8 and was well chuffed.

Our final event was a 10 lap trophy. This time, in blizzard conditions with sleet slicing, Damian just couldn't keep the slicked MG facing forward and Geoff ran a very tidy second with no spins and hardly a wobble.

He actually led for five laps because

no-one else could get off the mark at the start and the 4-litre V8 turbo

Dolemite had a couple of excursions into the weeds, so took that long to catch him.

Podium finish with trophy! He muttered that there was hardly anyone left to run, but he, Damien in the MG, the Dolemite and the 5.2-litre V8 TR7 had stuck it out to the bitter (literally) end, so why shouldn't they have the baubles and be proud.

Back to Bundalong by 10 pm.

*Driver* on such a high the adrenalin saw him all the way home.

At midnight as the stabbing chest pains that had intermittently accompanied *Pit Crew's* cough for the past two days were no longer intermittent, it was decided that a trip to the emergency department of Wangaratta hospital might be in order.

*Pit Crew* has pneumonia. While she snoozed groggily through fluids in and fluids out for the next few hours, *Driver* sat awake beside the bed holding her hand. Discharged 4.30 am.

After lighting the fire and getting the

house above four degrees *Driver* got to bed 5.30am, just exactly 23 hours after the alarm went off on Sunday morning. During the Australia versus US Healey Challenge in 2005 we boasted to the Yanks that in Australia we could race all year round. Yeah, well ... maybe a winter solstice event in the high country is pushing the envelope a bit!

### **Words & pic Wandy Leake**

POINTS SCORED TOWARD  
AHOCS COMPETITION  
CHAMPIONSHIP and 4 fastest laps

GEOFF LEAKE (100/4)  
AHOCS NSW Supersprint  
Saturday June 28th  
755 pts 1.16.66, 1.18.59, 1.19.05,  
1.19.11

GEOFF LEAKE (100/4)  
All British Race Meeting  
Sunday June 29th  
876 pts 1.15.92, 1.16.08, 1.16.65,  
1.17.16



# SPORTS & SPECIALIST TRIMMING

## **Tim Ward**

**61 Lt Hoddle St. Richmond Vic 3121**

**Ph: 0414 535 072**

**sasttw@hotmail.com**

# COMPETITION REPORT & MSCA NEWS

## MARQUE SPORTS CAR ASSOCIATION (MSCA)

### 2014 MSCA Championship

Round 7	Saturday 13 Sept	*PHILLIP ISLAND
Round 8	Sunday 12 October	*SANDOWN Bathurst 1000 Day (includes <i>Come and Try</i> )
Round 9	Sunday 23 Nov	*WINTON (includes <i>Come and Try</i> )

ENTRY FORMS are available on the MSCA website [www.msca.net.au](http://www.msca.net.au) . Ring Rod Vogt on 5962 1915 or 0408 395 240 or email [competition-MSCA@healeyvic.com.au](mailto:competition-MSCA@healeyvic.com.au) . Spectators are encouraged. Entry is free and you are welcome in our pit garage. Competition starts at approximately 9 am.

Events marked with \* count towards the competition championship. Sprint and Regularity events require a basic CAMS level 2S licence only. (contact Rod Vogt)

### OTHER EVENTS (*Major Victorian events highlighted*)

July 5/6th	*Porsche Club Sandown 6 Hour Relay
July 12/13th	*Historic QLD Race Meeting, Morgan Park, Warwick. Qld.
July 19/20th	*Vic State Circuit Race Series, inc MG & Invited British Sports, Sandown.
Aug 2/3rd	*Phillip Island 6 Hour Relay
Aug 9/10th	*VHRR Historic Winton (long track)
Sept 6/7th	*ARDC Muscle Car Masters inc Group S Historic at Sydney Motorsport Park
Sept 27/28th	*HSRCA Historic meeting, Wakefield Park. Goulburn. NSW.

### VHRR WINTON FESTIVAL OF SPEED August 8/9th

Run on the "long track" this event features a 12 lap Rose City Tourist Trophy race for Group S Sports Cars where you will see Healeys and Sprites, a 20 lap feature race for Group N Touring cars and a feature race for Groups C & A (ex Bathurst cars from the 1980s). Entry lists are not yet available so go to the website [www.vhrr.com](http://www.vhrr.com) for full details closer to the event.

## MSCA

Sandown, Victoria

22 June

THANK GOODNESS WE fluked a fine and relatively mild winter's day at Sandown because we had a record entry of 137 cars with seven run groups to control.

A wonderful effort from MSCA officials to give everyone four runs (20 plus laps) with very few delays.

And a big pat on the back to our AHOC president Selwyn Hall who ran the meeting so efficiently in his role as THE BOSS – the Clerk of Course.

Because we are not allowed to start race engines before 9 am to avoid upsetting sleeping neighbours the scrutineering was done by roving pairs of scrutineers who came to our cars where they were parked.

The MG Car Club used this event as a round for their competition championship, providing 43 entries and some scrutineers.

The Toyota 86/Subaru BRZ Club generously provided a couple of guys also having recently joined the MSCA as associate members.

The FIAT club was featured marque with a few lunch time laps by members in some lovely Fiat road cars.

What a mixed day of emotions for our six AHOC members.

Five of us had a fantastic day but this was somewhat overshadowed by disappointment when Russell Baker had an accident in his PRB Clubman and was unable to continue. First sprint session, turn one on the first flying lap and Russ spun into the armco on the inside of the track which is most unusual – we normally go harmlessly off in to the catch gravel on the outside.

Luckily Russ was okay but a bit sore from belt bruising and the Clubman suffered some rear end damage and will be back soon.

A reminder to us all that accidents can happen. Russell was his usual philosophical self but it must have been very tough to take.

He had just spent a lot of time re-engineering much of the Clubman and had even taken it to a Winton practice day on the Friday to make sure all was right.

By the time Elaine and Russell's son arrived the damage had been done and Russ and Martin had loaded the clubman in the trailer.

## MSCA

Sandown, Victoria

22 June

THANK GOODNESS WE fluked a fine and relatively mild winter's day at Sandown because we had a record entry of 137 cars with seven run groups to control.

A wonderful effort from MSCA officials to give everyone four runs (20 plus laps) with very few delays.

And a big pat on the back to our AHOC president Selwyn Hall who ran the meeting so efficiently in his role as THE BOSS – the Clerk of Course.

Because we are not allowed to start race engines before 9 am to avoid upsetting sleeping neighbours the scrutineering was done by roving pairs of scrutineers who came to our cars where they were parked.

The MG Car Club used this event as a round for their competition championship, providing 43 entries and some scrutineers.

The Toyota 86/Subaru BRZ Club generously provided a couple of guys also having recently joined the MSCA as associate members.

The FIAT club was featured marque with a few lunch time laps by members in some lovely Fiat road cars.

What a mixed day of emotions for our six AHOC members.

Five of us had a fantastic day but this was somewhat overshadowed by disappointment when Russell Baker had an accident in his PRB Clubman and was unable to continue. First sprint session, turn one on the first flying lap and Russ spun into the armco on the inside of the track which is most unusual – we normally go harmlessly off in to the catch gravel on the outside.

Luckily Russ was okay but a bit sore from belt bruising and the Clubman suffered some rear end damage and will be back soon. A reminder that accidents can happen. Russell was his usual philosophical self but it must have been tough to take. He had just spent a lot of time re-engineering much of the Clubman and had even taken it to a Winton practice day on the Friday to make sure all was right.

By the time Elaine and Russell's son arrived the damage had been done and Russ and Martin had loaded the clubman in the trailer. Elaine took it very well – at the track in front of us anyhow. My advice to you Russ is that a married man should forget his mistakes - there's no use in two people remembering the same thing!

I was two cars behind Russ and saw little of what happened because I was also struggling with lack of grip in the same corner and could have met the same fate. The track had been washed clean by heavy rain and it was cool early making things unexpectedly slippery.

For the rest of us, it was a great day.

In Regularity, Shane O'Brien in Hugh Purse's 100/4 battled every session with Rob Raverty for points supremacy in the MSCA competition.

They ended up with Shane first and Rob second with 1987 points and 1985 points respectively out of a possible 2000 points!

Just as exciting was to see Leon O'Brien back for his first event

for some time after shoulder problems, finishing a fine 5th in the 17 car regularity group with 1964 points - not far behind Shane and Rob.

A great result for Team Healey. Their points toward the AHOC Championship are shown below.

I must mention that Shane managed a new fastest lap for him in Hugh's 100 while making sure that recent work to cure overheating had been successful. I guess the answer is YES! With Russell out so early in Sprints it was left to Bill Vaughan and myself to battle in a record 15 car Class 1C Classic 0-1499cc.

Four Mini Cooper Ss and five MG Midgets from the MGCC swelled the numbers and kept Bill, myself, AHSDC president Peter Clarke and AHSDC member Tony Hannan in our Sprites busy all day.

We didn't let the side down with a second for me (behind a one-owner racing Mini Cooper S), fifth for Bill Vaughan and Peter Clarke came in third.

Totally unexpected (for Bill, not us) was a new best time for Bill that was an amazing two seconds quicker than his previous best at Sandown. He was looking stunned – it may have just been the supplements wearing off of course. (I think he was heading straight off to France to ride in the Tour before they wore off completely.)

And equally unexpected was my one second improvement in my best lap time because for a couple of reasons I had arrived at Sandown a bit tired and with an attitude of just enjoying the day with no expectations.

I guess relaxed leads to smooth leads to fast? Who knows but we take those days don't we Bill? The older we get the faster we get. Not too many things we do give that thrill at our age. I would like to thank our small but quality band of supporters who attended. C of C Selwyn Hall generously offered a visit to the control tower for our supporters and Terry Grigg, Paul McPherson, Sue Raverty, John Scott and Geoff Sharrock certainly enjoyed that experience. Leon O'Brien went up too – probably to see where the naughty drivers go for a tongue lashing in anticipation of his visit one day. Dennis Varley passed on the opportunity, maybe because he has been up there years ago as a naughty driver in his competition days?

Lyn Hope and Graeme Marks arrived a bit later.

I do need to thank John Scott and Geoff Sharrock for coming all the way from Taggerty. Geoff was looking very closely at Russell's Clubman and other cars, egged on by his "mate" John who even brought up the race car website [www.my105.com.au](http://www.my105.com.au) on his mobile phone looking for a suitable car for Geoff to buy! Geoff has been talking about this for a while and I was glad to have Graeme Marks there to help me answer some of Geoff's questions and offer some advice.

For what it is worth we felt that Geoff, and any other AHOC member, would be advised to prepare their Healey and enter regularity at MSCA to get a feel for the sport before jumping in at the deep end.

MSCA regularity is run at your comfortable pace and simple preparation of the Healey is adequate. The effort involved and the realities versus the dreams of getting on the track are best experienced first.



**POINTS TOWARD AHOC  
COMPETITION  
CHAMPIONSHIP  
& 4 fastest laps:**

SHANE O'BRIEN (100/4)  
974 pts \*1.39.25, 1.39.32,  
1.39.46, 1.39.51

ROB RAVERTY (3000)  
972 pts 1.59.37, 1.59.56, 1.59.61,  
1.59.65

ROD VOGT (SPRITE)  
948 pts \*1.32.66, 1.32.79,  
1.32.95, 1.33.18

BILL VAUGHAN (SPRITE)  
865 pts \*1.40.91, 1.41.80,  
1.42.05, 1.42.26

LEON O'BRIEN (100/4)  
862 pts 2.02.17, 2.02.42, 2.02.50,  
2.03.55

\* denotes new best time at  
Sandown



**A CLOSING THOUGHT**  
*If the world were a truly rational  
place it would be the men who rode  
side-saddle.*

**Cheers Rod  
Pics Sue Raverty**



# Austin Healeys at Le Mans Classic 2014



AN IMPRESSIVE CROWD of 110,000 spectators enjoyed the 7th Le Mans Classic held in the south of Le Mans and Mulsanne in the Sarthe region in France on July 4-6. Daytime practice began at 3:00pm on Friday, followed by a night session for the 450 historic cars and more than 1000 drivers from all over the world. Sebastien Loeb, nine-time world rally champion, lowered the French flag on Saturday releasing men and their cars to challenge the 13,629 km Le Mans 24-Hours long circuit.

The race for the six grids covering the periods from 1923 to 1979 got under way on Saturday 4th of July and continued until Sunday the 5th. The weather was challenging for competitors and their teams varying from scorching sunshine to torrential rain.

Denis Welch Motorsport looked after two Austin-Healeys, on the two different plateaus.

Ex works Le Mans 'DD300' with Karsten Le Blanc as a solo driver and Nils-Fredrik Nyblaeus in his Healey 100M with co-driver Barrie 'Wizzo' Williams.

Both cars ran smoothly with no major work required, so the team of four mechanics carried out routine

maintenance between the sessions.

A traditional Le Mans-style start preceded the formation lap for the first of three races of 43 minutes each, two day races and one night, with the obligatory stop for 90 seconds in each race for driver change overs.

No less than 75 classics dating from 1957-1961 battled in Plateau 3.

The famous ex-works 'DD300' was an original Le Mans car and ran quickly from the start.

Karsten Le Blanc with the combined time of 2:27:40.927 finished in 3rd place overall leaving behind Lotus, Jaguars and Porsches.

The team Nils-Fredrik Nyblaeus with co-driver Barrie 'Wizzo' Williams in Austin-Healey 100M started on a very competitive Plateau 2 with 80 cars aged between 1949 to 1956.

The team battled to a 4th place overall in the third race and 8th overall and 3rd in the class in the combined classification.

"I came to Le Mans to finish, unlike when I drove it in 2010, and in my dreams to finish in the top third," said Nils.

"The results achieved made the long journey from Sweden really worthwhile."

Denis Welch Motorsport was pleased

with the success of the Jean Pierre Lajournade/Vincent Aubry in the Jaguar E-type Coupe – 3rd overall with combined time at 2:28:54.041.

The team Lajournade's/Aubry's amazing result was achieved thanks to their consistency during three races and no mistakes on the track.

They finished in 9th place in the first race, and 8th in the second.

From beginning they knew the third race was going to be a challenge due to the wet track and pressure for the best result.

"It was a real pleasure to battle and drive in the rain!" said Lajournade.

Starting 12th on the grid after the first round he worked his way up to 4th then to 2nd to eventually finished in 6th place.

The car, with a DWM engine, gearbox and axle, worked perfectly and both drivers enjoyed exciting battles on the Le Mans track.

JP Lajournade will soon replacing his E-type for a new Roadster, which is currently under construction in France. Once again, the Le Mans Classic proves to be a magic retrospective of the greatest endurance race in the world.

*Article & photos courtesy  
Denis Welch Motorsport*