

INTRODUCTION TO HEALEY MOTORSPORT 101 MSCA FOR DUMMIES

Here is a refresher course at the start of the 2008 year.

1. *LICENSES FOR BEGINNERS*

As a current financial member of our club which is affiliated with the Confederation of Motor Sport you can start competing in speed events by applying for a Level 2 Speed CAMS License. Fill out simple forms (available from Rod Vogt or Brian Froelich) answering seven questions re your health and for \$95 you have a 12 month license.

No driving test is involved. A Level 2 S license enables you to compete at Club level (MSCA) Sprint & Regularity events, various open Historic race meetings in their Regularity events and at Hill Climbs.

2. *WHICH EVENT AND HOW TO ENTER*

It has become very difficult for individual car clubs to organize a driver training day or sprint meeting for their members due to the increasing cost of track hire and the need for a large number of experienced officials in place before CAMS will grant a permit. Entering a Marque Sports Car Association (MSCA) event is the perfect way to start and I will concentrate on their events here.

WHAT IS MSCA?

Marque Sports Car Association is an alliance between the Austin Healey Owners' Club, the Alfa Romeo Owners' Club of Australia, Austin Healey Sprite Drivers' Club, Bolwell Car Club of Australia, Club Lotus Australia, Fiat Car Club, Nissan Datsun Sports Owners' Club, Triumph Sports' Owners' Association and the Sports Owners' Club of Victoria.

MSCA is organized by a voluntary Executive Committee plus a delegate from each club.

As well as cars from the above clubs, there is a large number of classic and modern marque sports cars eligible to compete at MSCA events. Only members of the organizing clubs are eligible to compete for trophies.

PURPOSE OF MSCA

The purpose of MSCA is to enable club members to compete in SPEED EVENTS on race tracks using road registerable marque or non-marque cars at an affordable cost.

You can experience Phillip Island, Sandown, Calder, and Winton race circuits, and Morwell Hill Climb. Events are professionally organized and run to meet CAMS and AAASA standards of safety. Nine one day events are offered for 2008

SPEED EVENTS- HOW DO THEY WORK/

These events are NOT RACES. They are timed laps at a race circuit. There are a limited number of cars on the track at once (typically 10 – 20). The field is spread out to provide space between the cars, and is flagged off at intervals from pit lane. This is NOT a standing race start. The first lap is a warm up lap and timing starts at the end of the first lap. Starting in 2008 MSCA is using the Dorian electronic timing system which will allow larger run groups, less groups and therefore more runs per group and better value for your entry fee. Limited to 100 hired units, plus entrants who own their own Dorians, we can run up to 20 per group at Calder, Winton and Sandown, and up to 26 at the larger Phillip Island track. With a run time of 10 to 12 minutes per session, and 4 sessions for the day, you can achieve 25 plus timed laps for the day!

TWO WAYS TO COMPETE

(A) Regularity

The Regularity component is designed for those competitors who choose not to run at race speed but to drive their vehicles at a pace of their own choosing for their own enjoyment. It is particularly aimed at drivers of valuable cars or older, fragile cars, who do not want to risk damage or stress to their cars by driving at race speeds in the Sprints. Race prepared cars are generally not permitted. Regularity is a competition of setting consistent lap times. Other drivers on the circuit in a Regularity session will also be driving at their own pace with an intention of returning consistent times rather than a fast speed or time. Dicing by competitors in the Regularity event is prohibited. Whilst overtaking of a slower car is permitted, it can only be done when safe for both cars, and once a competitor has been passed they may not re-pass the car that passed them for the remainder of that lap. If a faster car should want to pass, indicate by clearly pointing which side they should overtake and maintain a steady line while they do so. The driver of the passing car will then know that you have seen him.

In the morning, a timed practice session will be conducted (during which drivers can do whatever speed they are comfortable with), after which each competitor will nominate a designated lap time (to the tenth of a second) for the event – you choose your time. Then you do your timed sessions as described above, with the aim of achieving your target time on EVERY lap. The number of sessions and the number of laps in each session will be determined by the organizers having regard to the orderly conduct of the program, and the time available. For each lap on which the competitor records a lap time **less than** his nominated time, a penalty of two points per tenth of a second of the error shall apply. For Each lap **greater than** his nominated lap time a penalty of one point per tenth of a second of the error shall apply. The winner is the competitor who has completed the required number of laps and has accrued the least penalty points, all with a chance of winning.

(B) Sprint

Sprint Class D 2500 to 3500cc for the quicker Healeys. MSCA says “not to be seen to be racing”. Aggression is frowned upon but you drive as fast as you can and pass anywhere, but safely. The fastest 2 laps are taken into account. You will get 4 timed sessions with a chance for more if the day has run smoothly. Fastest Class D cars do Winton long track in 1:39, Sandown 1:26, P.I. 1:52 and Calder 1:07.

SAFETY

1. All cars are scrutineered for safety and must meet Supplementary Regulations of the meeting
2. Meetings run to CAMS or AASA standards.
3. Senior officials monitor driver behaviour – inappropriate behaviour will not be tolerated.
4. This is a **TIMED EVENT NOT A RACE**
5. You compete on a race circuit with a smooth surface, good vision, all cars are going in the same direction and with a limited number of cars on the track at one time there is ample room to run off the track without car damage. Repeated laps lead to building of confidence, predictability and improved performance.

TO ENTER

Download a form from www.msca.net.au or join the Team Healey email list and have one sent to you for each event. Entries become available about 3 weeks before the event and close on the Wednesday before unless already fully subscribed. Let me know if you are entering. Entry fees for 2008 should be as for 2007 - \$140 for Calder, Winton and Sandown and \$160 for Phillip Island, including hire of the Dorian timer.

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MSCA FOR DUMMIES
Part 2

PREPARATION

From the Supplementary Regulations of the meeting

- All vehicles must, if fitted with an opening front panel (eg. Bonnet), utilize 2 separate fastening systems – bonnet strap or leather belt through grille.
- Tyres to be fitted with metal valve caps

- Fitment of fire extinguisher complying with Australian Standards 1841 (NOT AS 1841.2) of at least 900g capacity and secured via A STEEL BRACKET, within easy reach of the driver (BCF/Halon now prohibited). Must be less than 3 years old (date stamped on the cylinder) or serviced within last 3 years (with proof on lead tag attached by service company). **DON'T BUY A CHEAPIE FROM BUNNINGS.**
- All loose objects must be removed from the vehicle
- A blue TRIANGLE indicating position of the battery or isolating switch.
- Roll bar is recommended for open cars but is NOT compulsory.
- A supplementary return spring on each throttle - standard on Healeys
- Operating brake lights (bring spare globes).
- Safety equipment - for open cars, a full face helmet complying with AS1698 standard. No goggles with open face helmets. In case of fire all competitors must be dressed in long legged trousers and long sleeved shirts or other outer clothing made of non-synthetic material. Lap sash belts are adequate-you do not need a race harness – but they will check their condition and look for an Australian Standards tag.

IN ADDITION

- A good modification is a TOW HOOK front and rear. If you break down the recovery vehicle will expect you to attach a tow rope to get you back to the pits.
- An oil breather catch tank is not necessary for cars registered for unrestricted road use (schedule B 18)
- Fit a radiator overflow catch bottle. Although I cannot find a requirement for this in the regulations it HAS been asked for by individual scrutineers on 2 separate occasions recently.

You will be scrutineered to ensure all above supplementary regulations have been met. In addition they will check seat condition and mountings, condition of cooling system and hoses, fuel lines and fittings, steering freeplay, no oil leaks etc., play in hubs, rear vision mirrors, no structural rust/body cracks and body clean with no excess damage.

Of particular importance:

- Correct race numbers in correct position.
- Battery secure and posts covered (electrical tape OK)
- Forward facing glass (headlights) protected with clear covering (can use contact/book covering ex office supplies)

Have your car clean and in good condition and you will be fine. A service and tune before an event (keep brake fluid fresh) will minimize the chance of a wasted day.

ON THE DAY

- Arrive early. Gates open around 7am. We park as a group.
- Immediately prepare the car – remove all loose items and spare tyre and put your tool kit, chair etc behind your car.

- If you have your race numbers put them on, and your blue triangle marking battery position. You can buy these at Revolution Race gear 592 Whitehorse Rd. Mitcham. Ph 9873 8700. Cover headlights with clear material.
 - When the RACE OFFICE opens, take your CAMS LICENCE and CLUB MEMBERSHIP CARD and complete paperwork. You will be given a windscreen sticker showing your run group – stick it on you windscreen (top corner). The scrutineer will initial this when you pass scrutineering. This is your pass on to the track. You will be given a scrutineering form – place under windscreen wiper – with your race number printed. You will not be scrutineered without it. Buy race numbers at the OFFICE if needed and put on doors. No numbers-no scrutineering.
 - Go to scrutineering bay. The sooner you go the shorter the queue. You do not want to miss your first run, and Regularity is always first. They want to see your helmet, fire extinguisher, battery, under the bonnet and boot. Have them open and ready as you wait your turn and you will get your scrutineer on side.
 - A compulsory drivers briefing will be held after scrutineering finishes (sometimes before!) at around 8.45 to 9am
 - First run group will be called to dummy grid. (Regularity is usually first). Be ready for a 9.15 to 9.30 start.
 - Keep track of which run group is running – you may miss your call for subsequent runs. There is enough pressure without a last minute panic.
 - LEAVE YOUR EGO AT HOME. Your team Healey mates will help you through you first event or two and suddenly it will all seem so simple.
- So now you are ready for a Marque Sports Car Association Sprint/Regularity event. There is not a huge effort or cost to get started. The expense starts if you get hooked and want to go faster. But remember that the Regularity choice does not disadvantage fairly standard cars. In fact you are prepared for any Level 2 speed event.
- Historic Race Meeting Regularity
 - Festival of Sporting Cars Regularity
 - Hill Climbs
 - Various 6 hour Regularity Relay events.
 - Obviously the driving standard is higher, or more experience is required for these events. (except Hill Climbs)

One note of caution – check your INSURANCE POLICY. You are unlikely to have cover on the race track.