

Wayne Tyson



Standing 1/4 mile Championships Richmond

My interest in Motor Racing began in the early 1950's after seeing a colour photo of Mike Hawthorne in a G.P. Ferrari – magic red and Mike's green jacket and bow tie!

This was advanced further when my cousin, who lived next door, began dating and later marrying a young man with an Aston Martin DB2. He of course was a Motor Racing enthusiast. When he let me drive the DB2 on the Midland Highway at higher speed than I can do now in my current car (no L licence then and no open road speed limit) as a 16 year old, I was hooked. The DB2 with a twin cam six cylinder and a fabulous exhaust note was quite a car, when the average enthusiast had a Lukey exhaust!

At this time – mid 1950's, sports cars were at a high with great competition overseas between Aston Martin, Jaguar, Ferrari and Maserati. Also these cars looked magnificent, not like today's sports cars which look like they should be on the flight deck of an aircraft carrier!

On leaving school and starting work, the main object in life was a car-and one to race. After almost two years of saving and an interest free loan from my father, I bought an MGTF from David Lewis (well known in Motor Racing) The TF was further improved by Brian Bowe and the MG Factory Tuning Manual (power costs money, how true) My first event was at Muddy Creek Hill Climb in February 1957, I managed to win the Handicap. Next event was 57 Longford – 1st sports car in the under 1500cc Sports and Racing Car Scratch Race. More events followed in 1958 and 1959 – Penguin, Trevallyn and Domain Hill Climbs and Baskerville circuit racing.



1959 Baskerville

But it became obvious even with Brian's skills as a tuner; the TF was too heavy to battle the opposition, generally Austin Healy's and Triumph TR's. So in 1960 I purchased from Warwick Hine a lightweight MG TC he had built some years before. It was a huge improvement power to weight over the TF, but nothing is ever good enough in Motor

Racing. So with Brian Bowe's much appreciated expertise we began improving what was a class winning car to an outright contender. Competition in 1961 and 1962 was close, with good results at all Hill Climbs, standing ¼ Mile sprints, Baskerville and Symmons Plains circuit racing. I didn't compete at Longford, as the TC was set up as a short circuit car.



Front row Baskerville Sports Cars. 1962.

The improvement in lap times at Baskerville was mainly the result of fitting a factory designed exhaust system, and raising the compression ratio – 3 seconds a lap quicker, and later a supercharger – another 2+ seconds a lap. The car was now an outright contender, and finished 2nd in the Tasmanian Sports Car Championship at Baskerville against some very well prepared and driven opposition – Gino La Rovere's MM Repco Holden, Ray Long's Elfin Ford, Brian Bowe's Supercharged MGTC, and David Hallam's very quick Triumph TR3A were the main challengers. In 1963 I won the Baskerville sportsman of the year, and the MG car club champion.

By late 1963 the competition looked like getting tougher, new Elfin and Lotus imports likely in 1964 were a bit much for a 1949 MG.

So as my father had witnessed the hopelessly inadequate handicapping system at Baskerville, Symmons Plains and Longford, his interest in Motor Racing became non-existent, so there was no chance of a loan to buy an Alfa Romeo GTA – so I retired aged 25.

But not from life, my long-time friend Brian Higgins (yes the same one) and I got into gundogs and shot gunning which continues to this day. So if you want to talk sports cars or gundogs I am not usually far from the bar.