

Name: Matthew Unwin

Car: No.39 – Racekits Falcon (mk2)

From: Brigstock, Kettering

Profession: Payment Technology

Racing experience: nearly-nil

Racing Idol: Michael Schumacher (*#KeepFightingMichael*)

Racing ambitions: > To Enjoy > To Learn > To Progress ..and.. To Ultimately... Design, Build, Race and Win in my own car 😊 (Timeframe = 40yrs)

Racing achievements: Handful of shared enduro karting results (20yrs ago) and 2nd in Class B during my second 750F race at Silverstone 2021.



I am Matt Unwin. Fresh to the 750 Formula and actually fresh to racing. I have loved motor racing for nearly 30 years but never really had the opportunity to 'take it up'. A mixture of factors including the usual lack of money, the lack of space, the practical knowhow, lack of family and friends connected or associated with racing etc. In a one bed flat in your 20s without a parking space never mind a garage, or a suitable car to tow a trailer whilst trying to ignite your career and spending most of your disposable income on travelling and generally the standard antics of any 20 something – meant that my love of motorsport was consigned to the bi-weekly dose of F1 on the TV – when combined with travelling = attended over 20 GPs.

To say I have absolutely no experience of racing would be inaccurate however, as whilst working for Volkswagen in the earlier 2000's I did compete in 3 seasons of Club100 karting. These were 3hr endurance races with the kart shared, but this first taste of racing was amazing. Results were mixed, mainly because the competition was fierce (with entries from Williams and BMW F1 etc) – but I was usually the slower of my team mates. Second at Birmingham Wheels and third at Whilton Mill were highlights, my favourite track certainly being Buckmore Park.

I travelled for a year in 2004 and on my return started out on my career in payment technology with Barclays, so never really revisited the track – until of course now.

The story of how I found myself finally embarking on this is one of chance. A collection of factors that in isolation wouldn't have led to me waking up one day saying – 750 Formula is for me!

- **2017:** I had a Lotus Elise S2 for a number of years as my everyday driver. I had a friend who was conducting an Audi engine conversion to provide the car with some much needed extra power. In order to create principally a track day car.
- **2017:** Encouraged to try something similar I bought a VX220 chassis from a farm near Cardiff and set about creating something... I soon found that you needed a lot more than a wrecked bonded aluminium chassis and a worn out VAG 1.8T engine to create this 'thing'... So I decided to convert my original pride and joy instead – as it didn't seem beyond me.



- **2018:** I eBay'd the VX220 chassis and it was picked up by a couple of guys looking after some Lotus Cup cars (Joe Taylor, Ade Wotton) for the Lotus Cup UK series. This was a key moment, as having kept in contact they sent me tickets to visit them at a few races (Favoured circuit at that stage was possibly Oulton Park). I loved the racing and got on well with Joe – but it still reinforced my fear that racing was still too expensive for me.
- In late 2018 after my daughter was born, I heard from Joe explaining he was switching from the Lotus Cup to the 750 Motor Club – and converting his Lotus for the Enduro championship. At this stage I checked what this so called 750 Motor Club was all about ... and bingo, I couldn't get past the 750 Formula as it ticked all of the boxes I need:
 - Affordable for me as the main Fiat components, tyres and consumables all lasting seasons rather than a handful of races.
 - A good split between building - automotive engineering & competitive racing.
 - A really good approach to technical regulations that ensured competition was controlled but permitted varied technical and creative freedom.
 - Heritage – I loved the thought of racing in a series of such long standing and of course the prospect of competing in a Formula that Colin Chapman had.
 - After a few calls – I was also convinced I was on track as Martin (Racekits) confirmed you could get a car together without starting from absolute scratch. Everybody I spoke with were super friendly, and this was the final factor as I was after a club to join, a club for hobbyists / motor racing enthusiasts / healthy competition, not a collection of hardcore performance / speed fanatics.

- **2019:** I turned up at Brands Hatch when it was sleeting during qualifying and set about asking around to find Martin and Andrew. Finding Martin with what can only be described as a Russian Ushanka hat attempting to fix his front wing with a drill some tape and cable ties was a classic. No-nonsense motorsport. After a great day taking it all in – I decided this finally was my calling.
- **2020:** I received the chassis a week before lockdown – and spent a quiet year working from home by day and building in my workshop at night. As well as my car taking shape my son was also born in October – so a productive year in relative isolation.
- **2021:** After some issues to contend with during pre-season testing at Silverstone and Bicester, I finally made it out on track for the first time for round 1 at Silverstone. A wonderful day and a true realisation of a dream.

- **2021 >** To be determined 😊