

# THE STARTING GRID

Round 3

Photos: Chris Carter

## 2015 MG ROAD RACING CHAMPIONSHIP



The third round of 2015 saw a visit to sunny Sandown in Melbourne, 21 cars took to qualifying with a few changes since Phillip Island, Phil Chester had a new motor after an engine failure at the last round, Adrian Akhurst and Adam Cottam returned from South Australia with their MG TF Cup cars after missing Phillip Island. Ross Kaigg, Don Mazzone, Peter Rose and Greg White all ran their historic MG B's and Alan Evans made his debut in his MG F Trophy 160 from the MoPro series.

Qualifying got under way with Glen Wood (C V8 Roadster) the pace setter with a 1:18.83 from Richard Milligan's V8 Roadster. Chester, Akhurst and Gucciardo in MG TF Cup cars in 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> with Jason Holmes ZR190 in 6<sup>th</sup>, Adam Cottam's Cup car in 7<sup>th</sup> with Jim Robertson (Midget Special), Chris Gidney (ZR) and Geoff St John Cox (TR7) rounding out the top 10.

The MG Road Racing Championship did some fund-raising at a recent Shannons Auction in Melbourne. Our presence for Saturday and Sunday got a result of \$750 for the register for our efforts and a lot of interest in the series and our cars.

A big thank you to those who put themselves out to help again with a good turn out and some good weather helped us out. Andrew Watson's MG B got a lot of attention from MG admirers on Saturday





Race 1 got under way and it was Glen Wood who took the lead, for the 8 laps he was never headed with Milligan running 2<sup>nd</sup> for the duration while Phil Chester had a bit of a lonely run in 3<sup>rd</sup> place and getting his Championship back on track. Adam Cottam got a ripping start jumping both Akhurst and Gucciardo for 4<sup>th</sup> with St John Cox in 7<sup>th</sup> behind the pack. The horsepower of the TR7 V8 got him ahead of Gucciardo on lap 2 and he got both Akhurst and Cottam a couple of laps later on lap 4, Akhurst then found a way past Cottam on the same lap before an off on lap 5 for Cottam allowed Gucciardo to move up as well. St John Cox finishing 4<sup>th</sup> in the end with Akhurst and Gucciardo in 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>.

Jason Holmes and Jim Robertson battled away for the entire race, Robertson finishing ahead of Holmes with a recovering Cottam in 9<sup>th</sup> behind. Chris Gidney ran a solid 10<sup>th</sup> in a borrowed car after an engine failure on Friday sighting he wasn't entirely comfortable in the car to push hard. Early on Paul Vernall (ZR 160) and Kaigg (B) were running nose to tail before a move by Kaigg didn't come off ending with contact between the two and DNF's for both. This allowed John Stevenson and Don Mazzone (B Roadsters) to move up and the two running in 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> with Stevenson slightly quicker overall on a lap but the two separated very closely.

Peter Rose (B) and Andrew Watson (ZR 160) ran together on 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> places followed by Greg White in his bright yellow MG B behind in the top 15. David Mottram (B), Ursula Weidenmuller (TR6), Jim Dodd (ZR) and Alan Evans (F Trophy 160) rounded out the field in race 1.

Race 2 Sunday and Richard Milligan got the jump on Wood as the two diced up front, by lap 5 they begun lapping cars and Wood could get a little bit of a gap, although not the fastest of the two he had a better run and would take his second win for the weekend from Milligan. Behind Phil Chester got jumped by St John Cox early on before getting in front on lap two, from there he had a clean run and ultimately was 33 seconds ahead of St John Cox by the flag. Akhurst and Gucciardo picked up from race 1, the two running in line as they battled with St John Cox, the horsepower of the V8 making life very hard for them. Gucciardo's race came to an early end on lap 7 with a loose wire halting his progress. Akhurst pressed on as Cottam caught them before an off handed Cottam 5<sup>th</sup> place outright all of a sudden, he took up the fight with St John Cox but couldn't get past, Holmes ran in 6<sup>th</sup> place with Jim Robertson in 7<sup>th</sup> and a recovering Akhurst 8<sup>th</sup>.

# Series News

The 2013 MG Road Racing Champion made a move half way around the world during the off season and has been participating in the 2015 MGCC UK Trophy Series, his participation has been hampered by unfortunate errors with a few tough rounds including a disqualification at the drawcard MG Live event for being under weight. Cody is competing in a MG ZR 190 with former series champions Finishline and



has been very quick taking a number of poles and fastest laps so far in the season. We will keep you up to date during his season!  
Good Luck Cody!

A new face in the paddock during 2015 has been Vince Gucciardo, the Melbourne businessman stepped up from track days to racing this year by joining Team Wolfchester with the MG TF Cup that Glen Wood has successfully campaigned in the last two seasons.

Gucciardo has jelled well having placed within the top 5 at Round 2 and having good pace at Round 3 until electrical issues halted his progress. Vince has enjoyed his time so much he is looking seriously to buy his own vehicle to join the series permanently!

## Get Well Soon Rodney!

Rodney Gibb recently had a knew operation which has put him out of action for a few rounds, being forced to miss rounds 2, 3 and 4 at least, Rodney is recovering well and hopes to be at round 4 just as a spectator. From all of MG Racing we wish him a speedy recovery and can't wait to see him back in the paddock!

## Championship

1	Richard Milligan	MG B V8 Roadster	Open 2	222.5
2	Glen Wood	MG C V8	Open 2	222
3	Philip Chester	MG TF Cup	Open 1	177
4	Paul Vernall	MG ZR 160	Modern 1	140
5	Adrian Akhurst	MG TF Cup	Open 1	139
6	John Stevenson	MG B Roadster	Classic 1	122.5
7	Vince Gucciardo	MG TF Cup	Open 1	115.5
8	Chris Gidney	MG ZR	Modern 1	96
9	Jim Dodd	MG ZR 160	Modern 1	80.5
10	David Mottram	MG B Roadster	Open 1	77

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#46 Alan Evans in his ex Mopro MG F Trophy 160 debuted at Sandown



Chris Gidney had a solid run in 10<sup>th</sup>, inheriting 9<sup>th</sup> with Gucciardo pulling out, John Stevenson was the leading historic MG B holding off Andrew Watson in his ZR for 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> while Ross Kaigg recovered from rear of grid to 12<sup>th</sup> ahead of Peter Rose MG B. David Mottram in his MG B had a bit of a lonely race ahead of Ursula Weidenmuller in her TR6. Showing that you don't have to be at the front to have the most fun Alan Evans and Jim Dodd had a battle at the back, Alan a little quicker than Jim but the consistency of Jim kept him in the battle, the two separated by 0.159 of a second over the line, the mid engine, rear drive MG F beating the front wheel drive, front engine ZR. DNF was Paul Vernal with issues from the accident on Saturday still and Greg White with mechanical dramas.

Race 3 Sunday afternoon and it was Milligan who again got the jump on Wood, when the lap traffic came about it got pretty serious with Milligan's decisions affecting the gap he could hold to Wood. The two often separated by very small amount on track, Wood clearly a little better on the slower corners but Milligan getting very good exits and capitalising on the straights. With two laps to go Wood got in front and a move into the last corner while lapping Ross Kaigg made the difference as Wood held on to clean sweep the round from Richard Milligan.

Behind Phil Chester continued his strong weekend, running in 3<sup>rd</sup> place and holding off St John Cox early to make his race a little easier as Chester picked up another 3<sup>rd</sup> place across the line while St John Cox, Akhurst, Cottam and Jim Robertson battled away, the V8 Triumph having the legs on the straights while the little MG's were like insects all over the back of the Triumph through the corners. Robertson got past Cottam early on and battled Akhurst until finding a way past on lap 5, from there he tried to find a way through on St John Cox but the power advantage was just too much, Robertson settling for 5<sup>th</sup> with Cottam getting Akhurst for 6<sup>th</sup> and Akhurst 7<sup>th</sup> across the line. Jason Holmes in the first ZR ran strongly in 8<sup>th</sup> all race, not too far behind the battle group in front and having a solid weekend as well.

The top 10 was filled up with Chris Gidney running 9<sup>th</sup> and Ross Kaigg in 10<sup>th</sup>. Paul Vernal recovered from the rear of field to 11<sup>th</sup> not quite getting Kaigg across the line. John Stevenson and Don Mazzone continued their battle for 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup>, Mazzone not quite close enough to make a move on Stevenson during the race so the battle might resume at Round 4! Andrew Watson had a bit of a lonely run in 14<sup>th</sup> place with David Mottram running in 15<sup>th</sup> all race. Ursula Weidenmuller and Alan Evans took up battle for the entire race, the little Triumph having a little more mumbo on the long Sandown straights and Alan still finding his feet, Evans ultimately under a second behind across the line with Jim Dodd behind. The only non finishers being Peter Rose who pulled off on lap 1 and Vince Gucciardo with a wire coming loose halting his progress on lap 3, he will be hoping for better luck next round!