



2014 MGCC Interclub Challenge - Murray Stephenson

On the Queen's Birthday long weekend (7 – 9 June) the 2014 MG Challenge was conducted in SA. Participants began to gather at Lyndoch Hill on the Friday night to prepare for a weekend of serious competition and socialising. Rather than just the traditional rivals of South Australia (28) and Victoria (16) hopefuls also gathered from WA (2), Gold Coast (1), Brisbane (1) and the ACT (2).

Despite long term forecasts of rain, then cloudy for the weekend we enjoyed superb sunshine on both days although a bit cool on the Sunday.

Saturday's Super Sprint at Mallala was conducted in identical format to the MSCA events and a number of key officials from MSCA events contributed to the smooth running of the day. A great contingent of club members helped with flagging, timing and a variety of tasks to make the event run well.

The variety of cars at these events is superb from Lindsay Hick's PA Special, Ray Skewes's TD, Wes Bray's 1100, through variations of MGAs, MGBs and MGCs to the MGF/TF and modern saloons. It was great to watch them all in action with each driver competing against their own time. Bob Schapel's rapid supercharged TC is always spectacular to watch and Bill Schapel's Y-type Tourer was superb to see at speed. We also had a few members in Non-Marque cars and an invited group of Mazda MX-5s who jumped at the opportunity to have their own grid and to help us with numbers.

It was great to see some faces who have not been out for a while like John Tamke, John Kemp (starter) and Graham Loader and Lindsay Caffin having his first outing in his MX-5.

Cars are run in groups of similar times and each lap is timed so the driver is attempting to improve his/her time during the day but the competition is enthusiastic once the red mist descends and a car in front can be chased. One highlight of the competition was Wes Bray passing another car, his first we believe.

There were a few mechanical issues and the occasional spin but only one car had to be towed back to the pits. It was Kim Cole's MX-5 which had gearbox troubles after only two laps.

After a great dinner at Lyndoch Hill and a good night's sleep we fronted up to Collingrove on Sunday morning for another day of fun. The hillclimb field of 43 MG members was down from the 50 at Mallala but the competition was just as keen. For some competitors it was their first visit to Collingrove and all found it a challenge.

For many the cool conditions resulted in slower than best times but Georgie Schapel managed to return a personal best in Bill's TC taking 0.75 sec off her previous best.

Jan Kirk was very excited to receive placings in the Ladies class, second at Mallala and third at Collingrove. Sunday night was the presentation dinner at Lyndoch Hill where we again enjoyed a good dinner and great company followed by a well earned rest.

An event like the Challenge doesn't happen without the contributions of a lot of people. Thanks to all the competitors and officials from MGCCs and MX-5 Club, the MSCA officials, the organizing committee and particularly Bev for her leadership of the committee.

After the competition was finished and the dust settled the final result had SA victorious with a final score of 7.137 points to Victoria's 5.333 points. To feature in the final scores a state needs to have at least five drivers compete in each event so the smaller representation from WA, ACT & Qld did not qualify. Unfortunately the Victorians forgot to bring the Challenge trophy with them so we trust they will send it over soon.

The overall feedback from the event is that it was good competition, well organized with great social activity and all achieved in a wonderful relaxed spirit.

"Thank you" emails received;

- Just a quick note to thank you for the fantastic weekend.

This was my first interstate event so I wasn't sure if I was properly prepared.

You and your group made everything so easy for us – both the events and the social nights.

I know it must have been a huge job but well done for such a great success.

We can't wait to come over for the next one & we plan next time to spend a couple of extra days in the area.

Thanks again - David Ritchie, MGCC Vic

- Patricia and I enjoyed the atmosphere on both days.

What a great club you have.

Kind regards, Fletcher Bolton

- Thank you for the invitation to join in your celebrations this weekend. I think that I can safely say that all of us had a great time in our MX5s. It was an extremely well run wonderful event. The chance for us to have our own grid of MX5s brought great joy along with a large amount of friendly ribbing, and it is always a pleasure to compete at Collingrove. It was good to see everyone competing with great rivalry but with all the common sense and respect for our fellow competitors. Congratulations to all the trophy winners and a huge thank you to all involved in the huge job to organise such a mammoth event.

Thanks, Marque Le Maistre

- Just a quick note to thank you and your fellow committee for putting on a great weekend, both socially and competitive. Ray, Mick and myself always enjoy our trip over and look forward to the next visit.

Again Thank you. Cheers Kevin Leishman Vic

- We are now back in Melbourne after a couple of relaxing days in Adelaide. Please pass on our thanks to all the SA organising team - as usual we had a great weekend - great facilities, friendly people, nice wine and plenty of MGs!

Regards - Mike & Eiko