HSRCA - 1960s racing cars - Newsletter No.16 - October 2011

Group M for cars 1961 to 1965
Group O for cars 1966 to 1969

Ed Holly HSRCA Groups M & O Racing Registrar.
edholly@optusnet.com.au

Welcome to the 3rd newsletter of 2011. A great proportion of this newsletter (20 pages) is taken up by 4 of our guys having an immense amount of fun flying the Aussie flag on the other side of the globe. There has been a great increase in recent times of competitors prepared to travel to other parts of the world and it would be nice to think our own Tasman Revival has helped in this regard, but also there is no denying what the Formula Junior boys get up to, as this quartet show. Their enthusiasm really shows in their reports, almost like they are kids again.

Oh well we can all dream, but for most of us, it's back to more mundane happenings in our own patch first.

HSRCA Meeting Wakefield Park, 24th and 25th September 2011.

The first thing to mention is the weather. It was simply horrible, for a fortnight before, even the day before, the weather was balmy, dry and perfect. Come Saturday it had changed to rainy, windy from the southeast, and cold – a wind chill factor around 3 degrees. So I guess that we had a dry qualifying then 3 dry races followed by the last as the only wet race wasn't too bad.

Qualifying.

Cold windy and a hint of drizzle, but not enough to actually wet the ground greeted those sitting on the dummy grid for the start of the practice session. Richard Carter had the wick wound right up in the Elfin Mono twincam to set pole with a 1:04.6 easily outclassing the field by 2 seconds. The 1976 TAA Formula Ford Driver to Europe Champion

Richard Carter in the very quick Elfin Mono – Peter Schell photo

certainly showed how to handle the very cold and slippery conditions. Next was another Group O stalwart from the 1960s this time, Paul Hamilton, who steered the Elfin 600 twincam around for 8 laps before getting down to a commendable 1:06.8. The next row of the grid comprised of Peter Barclay in his Brabham BT21A twincam and Ed Holly Brabham BT21C twincam. Holly's excuse for being as slow as in the 9's was a misfire above 7500 rpm – a

problem that had plagued the car for some meetings now. 3rd row seen David Kent in his Brabham BT29 twincam a second quicker than Wayne Wilson in the first of the non twincams his beautiful Rennmax 1600 with Ford pushrod power. A Sports Racing car was next, the Olympus Ford, fresh from a rebuild and looking very nice indeed.

The Formula 3 and Formula Junior brigade were next, and also fresh from a refurbish was Victoria Le Gallais in the

Victoria LeGallais in the freshly painted BT15 now black and silver. - Peter Schell photo

997cc Ford MAE powered Brabham BT15. Victoria headed the Juniors of Peter Strauss, Brabham BT6 and Don Thallon, Lotus MRC 22. Obviously Victoria was reveling in the hometrack advantage. Then came Gary Malyon in the 1968 Pitstock Special, a very interesting car and beautifully presented powered by a Holden red motor. Next was another Group O stalwart, Geoff Varey in his Team Schoostring Gryphon, a supercharged 1500 Peugeot powered car that Geoff has a ball in. Jeff Brown brought a couple of cars up from south of the border, and put the ex Tim Schenken F3 Brabham BT28 MAE powered car next on the grid in position 13. Also in a beautifully presented car was Dale Harvey in the Proton F2 car, twincam powered, this car has distant history with Paul Hamiton in the 1960s. Behind a couple more sports cars came Graham Brown in his Brabham BT2 Formula Junior, followed by another of our stalwarts, always there and always beautifully presented, Brian Lear in the 1965 twincam powered Elfin Mono. Murray Bryden in the blue Lotus 20 Formula Junior was a bit off his normal pace and brought up the rear of the field in position 19.

Race 1

Cold, windy but a dry track, the southeasterly persistent but holding its moisture which was appreciated by all. At the drop of the flag, the Elfin Mono on pole didn't move, the cars behind thankfully able to take avoiding action as Richard finally got off the line assuming 7th spot. First time past the post, the order was as per the grid, except for Carter and Le Gallais had dropped back behind the 2 Juniors of Strauss and Thallon. Into turn 2 for the 2nd time and the cold slippery conditions caught Barclay out, over-running the corner and taking to the grass allowing Holly up into 2nd spot. Also getting by were Kent and Carter. The race then settled down with Carter gradually closing on the leaders and Le Gallais being vey persistent in her attempts to get past Thallon. Barclay too managed to climb back though the field only to have a spin on lap 4 putting him well back in the field with only a lap or so left. Gary Malyon

managed to split the Juniors of Strauss and Thallon and Le Gallais continued on her persistent way, but couldn't find a way around the MRC Lotus 22. Carter eventually took the lead on lap 5 by which time Holly had loomed up into Hamilton's mirrors and they both made their last lap their fastest. Jeff Brown got down to a very respectable 12.7 with Dale Harvey keeping out of trouble obviously enjoying the Proton immensely.

Peter Barclay in the Brabham BT21 recovered to pass Wilson Rennmax and Kent Brabham BT29, only to spin undoing all the hard work. – Peter Schell photo

Race 2

Last Race of the day, colder, windier and now wet. Holly had withdrawn from further races with a slight problem, moving Kent and those further back up one position for the start. This was to be a Carter benefit, leading from start to finish in a masterful display of driving in atrocious conditions. The big mover this time was Kent, who also reveled in the lack of grip in the BT29. Barclay had an off on the first lap ending up near the rear of the field, but managed to salvage a 4th well back from the well spaced leaders. Don Thallon headed the Junior / F3 brigade with Jeff Brown

David Kent in the Brabham BT29. – Peter Schell photo.

having one of his best drives to finish outright 6th and just a car length behind Don. Victoria Le Gallais was a bit further back as were Geoff Varey and Graham Brown. Peter Strauss cruelly robbed himself of a finish after a spin he returned to the pits having not received the chequered flag. In the end it was Carter, 12 seconds to Hamilton, 20 second to Kent 17 seconds to Barclay and then 30 seconds to Thallon and Brown being the last on the lead lap.

Peter Strauss Brabham BT6 spinning behind Don Thallon and then missing the race finish. – Peter Schell photo.

Race 3

Sunday mid morning, dry just maybe a little better than Saturday. A 7 lap journey with an almost full field comprising 17 starters. An addition to the grid of the Dalro Jag of Les Wright. No surprises this time at the sharp end of the field with the cars a bit spread out by race end. Gary Malyon was really coming to grips with the Pitstock Special now into

Gary Malyon in the Pitstock Special with the Dalro Jaguar of Les Wright looming up behind. – Peter Schell photo.

the 12's and leading all the quick Juniors across the line. Geoff Varey drove a supurb race to finish 8th outright keeping the big Dalro at bay. Don Thallon again took the Junior honours from Jeff Brown with Victoria Le Gallais next. Dale Harvey was again keeping out of trouble enjoying time in the Proton, whilst Peter Strauss was definitely

off his usual pace. Graham Brown too was enjoying a car he has campaigned now for many years, the ex Youl Brabham BT2. Brian Lear this time brought up the rear guard.

Dale Harvey and the Proton, and ex Paul Hamilton car. Dale settled into some pretty good times by the end of the weekend. Peter Schell photo.

Race 4

With all but Peter Barclay from the front 2 rows absent, 11 cars faced the starter, including the Dalro Jaguar from the rear of the field. This car must have done around 100 laps over the weekend racing in the Aussie Specials races as well, with Les mostly keeping the big car on the island. Gary Malyon got down into a consistent 12 second a lap to follow pole sitter Barclay home in the 4 lap journey just managing to keep the Dalro behind by not much more than a car length at the finish. Don Thallon and Peter Strauss continued their battle royale, and just when Don thought he had it in the bag, Peter did his fastest lap and almost pipped him at the post. Victoria Le Gallais reversed the tables on Jeff Brown and Dale Harvey did his fastest times of the weekend, breaking into the 15's, as did Graham Brown in the BT2. Geoff Varey rounded off a successful weekend with a fine 5th outright in the Gryphon.

Geoff Brown had a great weekend, swapping places with the other F3 car, the BT15 of Victoria LeGallias. Peter Schell photo.

So ended a weekend of very cold conditions, most competitors actually looking forward to the drive home and some warmth at last but before concluding one must mention the Aussie Specials that were a feature of the event and organized by Dick Willis. There were some terrific cars amongst their grids and it was great to see some of the Mexicans come up and cross the Rio Grande with some of these cars. Now for a few more Peter Schell photos …

Paul Hamilton Elfin 600 did manage to lead a few laps off Richard Carter in the Elfin Mono.

Brian Lear in the resplindid as always – Elfin Mono

Wayne Wilson in the Rennmax BN2

Winton Historic Festival of Speed 14th and 15th August.

A quick perusal of the results shows John Bowe won every race from Paul Stubber, convincingly in the first two but in the last by a car length. Peter Barclay dropped out after race 1. Peter Strauss and Victoria Le Gallais continued their battle, with Peter coming out in front, but with Victoria invariably setting the faster time ! I know from experience getting these 997cc F3 cars off the line is a problem against the Juniors and once they are in front its pretty hard to find a way around unless someone makes a booboo. Welcome to the world of the underdog Victoria !

Attached are some photos from the VHRR website, the top ones are Neil Hammond's and the bottom two are Jim Jones"

Murray Bryden in the Lotus 20

John Bowe in the Brabham BT23 leading Paul Stubber BT29

Peter Strauss Brabham BT6 with Victoria LeGallais Brabham BT15 trying to find a way past

Peter Strauss in the Brabham BT31 running with wings as a Group Q car.

Richard Nitsche (SA) in the Elfin Catalina

John Bowe doing stretching exercises ? Trevor Simpson, the Brabham BT23 owner extreme left.

I haven't been able to get an in depth report on proceedings at this meeting and have summarized practice here from Natsoft for the M and O cars.

1	2	Trevor Simpson	John Bowe (NSW)	Brabham BT23B-2	2500	OR	1:25.7163*
2	54		Paul Stubber (WA)	Brabham BT29		OR	1:27.6315
21			Peter Barclay (NSW)	Brabham BT21A	1600	OR	1:33.0935
18	1		Peter Strauss (VIC)	Brabham BT6	1100	MR	1:41.3452
19	15	Peter Barclay Victoria LeGallais	(NSW	Brabham BT15	997	MR	1:42.8170
21	7		Murray Bryden (VIC)	Lotus 20B	1098	MR	1:47.2187
	77		Richard Nitsche (SA)	Elfin Catalina	1498	MR	

Peter Ellenbogen did send a link to his collection of photos and it is included here, along with a few words he wrote about the meeting. http://www.flickr.com/photos/peterellenbogen/sets/72157627499800099/

This event built on the foundations of last year and will hopefully remain a regular on the calendar. Racing throughout all the classes was robust and entertaining - my personal highlight was seeing the F5000's run at Winton for the first time, including the very same Elfin MR8C which James Hunt used to win here in a rare non-F1 outing in 1978 - brilliant!

As always, please forward this email to anyone who you think may enjoy the pics and please contact me with any enquiries at this email address (which also appears on each image in the collection.)

Please let me know at any time if you would like to be removed from the list of recipients of links to my historic racing images.

PIT GOSSIP

Another Brabham BT29 about to join our ranks …. The owner lies at the answer to this riddle *So which member who has spent over 10 years in the Club peddling a humble but well presented pushrod all over the country and complaining about not having a prize category for these cars, but who often finishes ahead of faster looking machines, and who recently said that when he grew up he might buy a twin-cam car, has acquired a beaut Brabham BT29 gadget from the USA, and will now have to shape up (like loose 10kgs) to fit into the thing? Now we will see if it is the car or the driver....* and if you need more clues *And the pushrod is not for sale, but he thought it necessary to inform the creator of the said pushrod of the change of allegiance, only to be told he was unlikely to go any better in the Brabham!*

From Richard Carter … News on his Elfin 600. …. Although my Elfin 600B was sold some months ago the new owner, Andrew Goldie, asked me to continue garaging it until he could arrive from Perth. He and John Van Leeuwen arrived and stayed at my house late September for a handover. John is an old sparring competitor of mine from early FFord days and for a while we were both on the FFord committee. Hopefully, Andrew will enjoy the 600 and historics in general. He now has the car based in Sydney at Anglo Motorsports and will compete in major east coast historic meetings starting with Sandown this November. He cannot make the Eastern Creek late November event as it clashes with a WA state round of the FFord series where he is currently running second outright.

In the last Newsletter I made reference to CAMS with a ***"Food for Thought"*** personal article. I would like to report that I did not receive one reply for or against my views.

Sir Jack Brabham returns to home territory to sign books and memorabilla

One of the booksellers who has been at the last couple of Tasman Revivals, Chris Woods, has ties with Sir Jack Brabham and Ron Tauranac, and when he found out that Sir Jack was going to be in town on Saturday 1st October he asked Sir Jack and Ron if they would mind coming back to the St George area to do a little book signing etc at the Antique Centre in Kogarah. After they agreed, and after enlisting the help of Bob Young (who assisted on the 2008 Tasman event and was Sir Jack's business manager for quite a time), Chris then got the local newspaper involved and the results can be seen in this extract. This is from the Sutherland shire edition, the St George edition carried the story on the FRONT page. There were quite a few of our fraternity that turned up, including yours truly ! --- Well done Chris …

theleader.com.au

News

Speed supremo returns 'home'

Hundreds mob Brabham

By David McCowen

HUNDREDS of motor racing fans travelled to Kogarah on Saturday to meet St George and Sutherland Shire legend Sir Jack Brabham.

Born and raised at Hurstville, Brabham, 85, left Sydney to race on the European stage and was the first Australian to become a formula one world champion.

Brabham signed copies of his biography at the Southern Antique Centre in Kogarah, where he was joined by renowned race car designer Ron Tauranac.

Event organiser Chris Wood said people flocked to see the championship-winning pair together.

"It was unbelievable," he said. "The centre here has never had so many people in it."

Mr Wood said racing enthusiast Don Halliday, of Ryde, brought a golden conversation piece along to the meeting — a twin-cylinder midget raced by Brabham in Sydney's dirt-track scene.

"Sir Jack was reunited with his first race car, a speedway midget constructed by local early cycle champion Ronnie Ward in 1947," Mr Wood said. "Don Halliday bought the car as a wreck and then restored it."

Mr Halliday said the air-cooled midget gave Sir Jack some of his first success in his drive for victory on the world stage.

"All F1 drivers started in go karts," he said. "That's his equivalent of a go kart in reality, as we didn't have go karts back in those days."

Brabham now lives in Queensland, and Mr Wood said he needed frequent treatment for his health.

He said Sydney enthusiasts made sure not to miss the rare public appearance.

"There were hundreds, literally hundreds there," Mr Wood said. "People are so proud of him."

Jack's back: Car designer Ron Tauranac (left) and Don Halliday with former F1 world champion Sir Jack Brabham and the speedway "midget" Brabham once drove.

Picture: Lisa McMahon

Tom Tweedie takes his V8 Supercar to the Bathurst 1000 meeting.

Young Tom Tweedie was part of the Fujitsu series at the Bathurst 1000 meeting. Qualifying 16th in his first trip to the Mountain in a V8 Supercar, Tom finished a fine 12th in the first race, but didn't fare so well in the 2nd. Tom lists amongst his interests – Historic Racing – which is terrific, as Tom hasn't forgotten where it all started for him. Pictures below is a Paul Lewis photo of Tom in the Lola F2 car at the 2008 Tasman, the Garmin sponsored car is from the Fujitsu website.

from this….

to this …

Re the dnf in the last race … Tom explains *"I had nailed the start and beat Mostert into turn one, and then gained spots from Blanchard and Percat, Unfortunately Mostert just launched me into turn two. I feel a bit robbed because we had a really strong car and were going to be on for a great result in the top ten."*

Leo gets another Gold Star. **Courtesy Club Lotus Australia and CAMS website.**

On Father's Day at the Muscle Car Masters at Eastern Creek Raceway, CAMS President Andrew Papadopoulos was able to re-present Leo Geoghegan with the CAMS Gold Star he was awarded for his championship win of the 1970 Australian Drivers Championship. The original was unfortunately misplaced some time ago and Andrew said it gave him great pleasure to now be able to replace it. Leo Geoghegan had a remarkable career as one of Australia's finest drivers during the 1960s and early 1970s having spent much of his racing career in Lotus open wheel racing cars and sports racing cars. Leo won the 1970 Australian Driver's Championship in his Lotus 59B Waggott. In addition to winning the 1970 Australian Drivers Championship in his Lotus 59B Waggott, Leo won several national motor racing titles including the:

- 1960 Australian GT Championship
- 1962 Bathurst 6 Hour Classic
- 1963 Australian Formula Junior Championship
- 1968 Surfers Paradise 6 Hour
- 1973 & 1974 Australian Formula 2 Championship

Today, Leo has retired from competition but is still an enthusiastic supporter of historic motor racing and remains one of Australia's great driving champions.

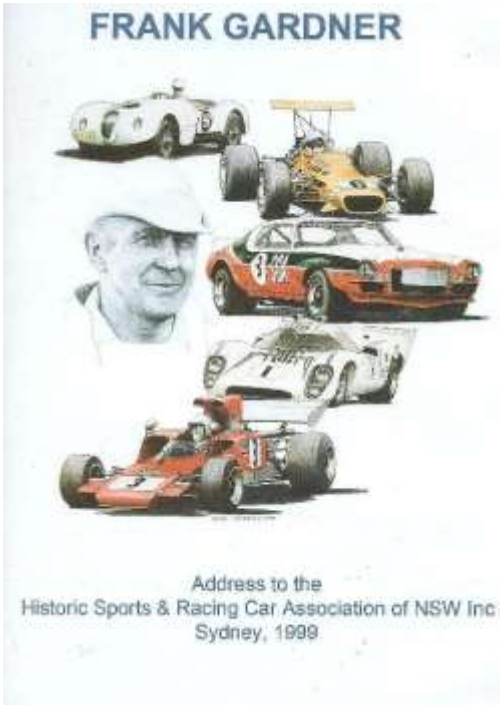
Brian Wilson to hang up his (motorsport) helmet.

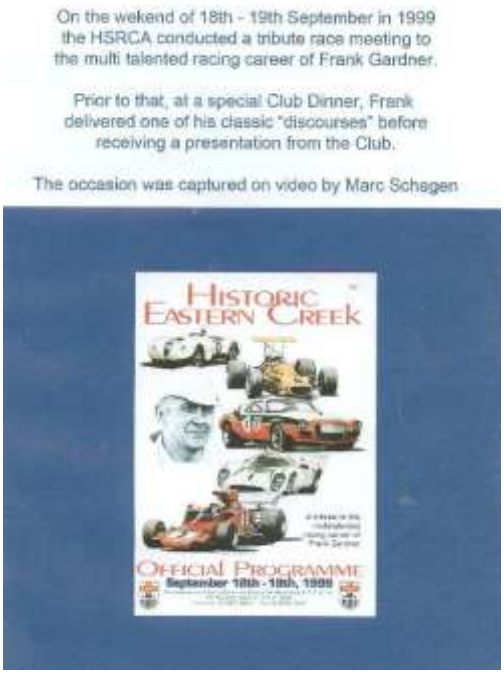
I spoke to Brian Wilson at Wakefield on our race weekend, and Brian advised he was "hanging up the Historic Motorsport Helmet" Brian of course is the owner of 2 Brabham single seater cars, one being the 1967 F1 Championship car that was driven by Sir Jack that year to second place behind team-mate Denny Hulme and carried the No.1 on it's side for the year as Jack was the World Champion. In recent times Brian has made some epic motor cycle journeys in some very remote parts of the world and he obviously very much enjoys this form of recreation. We are all very fortunate that Brian has been involved in our sport for the time he has, and has allowed us the priviledge of enjoying what must be one of the pinnacle Group O cars, in fact the pinnacle O car of all as far as I am concerned. Brian has also been most unselfish very often allowing other drivers to compete in his cars at different times, including having Richard Carter drive the BT24 in the last Tasman Revival race. I am sure I speak for everyone in M and O and wider afield, when I say "thankyou Brian" and all the very best for the future.

Brian (right) and in the Brabham BT24 at the 2008 Tasman Revival. Peter Schell photos.

DVD of Frank Gardner available.

Marc Schagen had the foresight many years ago to record the talk Frank Gardner gave to the HSRCA membership. Many of us were at this talk, and with that laconic straight face, Frank had us all not only enthralled but also in stitches with





laughter. Twelve years have passed since then, and sadly so has Frank, but Marc has made the talk available on a DVD for a very reasonable $20 plus $3 postage Australia wide. Contact Marc at mschagen@bigpond.net.au or 0418252323 If required overseas, contact Marc and he will advise postage cost.

Pentagliders become World Champions.

Back in newsletter 14, mention was made of a team of budding engineers in the form of Team Pentagliders from Launceston Tasmania and that they had won the F1 in Schools Australian competition and were off to Singapore for the world Championships. One of the sponsors was ACL bearings who are also based in Launceston. The World Championships have now been held, and the Pentagliders are now the World Chammpions. None other than Bernie Ecclestone presented the Team with their Trophy. Quoting from the web-page which can be found at
http://www.f1inschools.co.uk/news--bernie-ecclestone-presents-his-trophy-to-newly-crowned-2011-f1-in-schools-world-champions.html

Bernie Ecclestone, President and CEO, Formula One Management, presented the newly crowned 2011 F1 in Schools™ World Champions with the trophy which he commissioned especially for this global educational initiative, meeting the winning Australian team, Pentagliders, in the paddock at the Singtel Formula 1™ Singapore Grand

After writing the above news about the Penta-Gliders, I received this note from Bruce Williams – Note that the team members have been offered a scholarship with the City of London University ….

Hi Ed

Just wanted to share the good news- the PentaGliders (Australian National Champions) are now the World Champions!!!

In a close battle they had the fastest car by 0.001 seconds, they won the Best Engineering (McLaren-Mercedes Trophy) and took home the Bernie Eccelstone World Trophy, which he personally presented to the Team at the Singapore F1 GP.

The PentaGliders used one of the photos we took of your car in Sydney on their display in their booth, so we have to thank you for your help in the win.
There are some good photos at www.f1inschools.org.au which is Re-engineering Australia's website (they run F1 in Schools in Australia and now NZ), and I will send you some more when I sort out my own.

Each of the Team has an offer of a Scholarship to The City of London University, one of the top Engineering Universities in the world.

Being there at the World Titles with the PentaGliders was such a good experience- they were very worthy winners and popular with all the other 23 teams from 17 countries.

We are all still really excited about the win, perhaps you might like to run an article about the link to your car/Repco Brabhams/PentaGliders/ACL Bearing Company (formerly Repco Bearing Company) in your magazine.
We would be pleased to help with some information and pictures.

Kind regards
Bruce Williams
Product Engineer
ACL Bearing Company

Australian motoring documentary about to hit the airwaves.

Starting Sunday evening 16th October at 1930 on ABC 1 – channel 2 – is the story of motoring in Australia, the documentary named Wide Open Road – Australia through the windscreen there is a website that details the show at

http://www.tvtonight.com.au/2011/10/airdate-wide-open-road.html

In one of the 3 parts will be a skit re-enacted at Eastern Creek go-karting track using Peter Simms' Brabham BT23 and Ed Holly's BT6 commemorating the day (Sir) Jack Brabham walked onto the grid at Zandvoort in 1970 with a walking stick and a cane. Should be worth a look.

From Graham Adelman on behalf of a friend.

1968 McLaren M6B - Chassis #5006

Known as the Autodelta car. Went from Trojan (who built the customer McLarens) to Autodelta and used as the test bed for the Alfa T33 prototype program. Then relegated to back of a warehouse till late 70's when Joel Finn found it, and rranged to bring it to the US and sold it to Charlie Gibson (SascoSports) before it hit the shore. Has remained in Sasco ownership ever since.

Originally assembled by Ken Duclos of KayDee Automotive in MA. Raced extensively by Charlie and his business partner Dave Handy on the East Coast over the past 40 years. Complete restoration done by SascoSports over the course of 2009-2011. Complete tub re-build, new 400 cu in all aluminum engine and new body work. Ran 2011 Monterey Historic Re-Union. Offered at US$425,000.

Contact Dave Handy at dave@sascosports.com, located at Virginia International Raceway in Danville, Virginia, 434-822-7200.

Dave is a good friend of Graham's and Graham himself bought last year the Ian Walker Lotus 23 that was the class winner at the Nurburgring 1000 in 1962.

Website correction – Kitty Chisholm's photos of UK and European events.

Kitty Chisholm has supplied us with some great images in the past and also for this edition of the newsletter. The web-address I gave last newsletter wasn't correct – it is - www.praxeis.co.uk and the photos are under the tab Chisholm photography.

Graham Hoinville awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia.

It is a great pleasure to formally acknowledge Queen's Birthday Honours' recipients Graham Hoinville, who was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia for service to motor sport through a range of technical and executive roles. The following photos come from http://www.speedcafe.com/2011/06/24/graham-hoinville/ which details Graham's career. Graham had a great deal to do with Historic Motorsport until his retirement recently. The TC is at the 1955 AGP where Graham won 2 support races.

From the Australian Formula Junior newsletter.

My friend Richard Daggitt in South Africa has decided to part company with his Historic racing cars due to adverse health issues, and has asked me to see if anyone in Australia could be interested, and as 2 of the cars are Formula Juniors, I am sure you will be interested in the details.

1960 Scorpion FJ No 500-S-7 fully restored front engine DKW 1100cc 2 stroke with excellent history $46,000

1961 Cooper T56 with 1100cc BMC engine, and 5 speed Jack Knight box, car previously owned by Ivan Glasby in NSW $59,000

1957 T41 F2-1-57 Cooper, 1500cc sohc FWB Climax plus original FWA 1100 cc block, car currently under restoration and basically complete except for gearbox.$59,000

1957 T43 F2-29-57 Cooper 1640cc dohc FPF Climax engine, ERSA 4 speed box. car recently restored. $105,000

Mk 9 Cooper 500 F3 may also be available at the right price.

I have converted the RSA Rand to current Aust $, and the prices quoted are negotiable, but relate to a local sale. If you want more information on any or all cars listed, please contact me or Richard direct.

Regards

KELVIN C. PRIOR
SECRETARY AFJA

Phone: (03) 9707 1652
www.australianformulajunior.com

Speaking earlier of the UK and Europe, here is the latest reports from that intrepid band of Formula Junior guys having a ball.

The continuing story of 4 guys making us all envious with their overseas exploits.

SILVERSTONE 24th July 2011

Innocents *Abroad* *by Bill Hemming*

Please note all these photos are courtesy of Kitty Chisholm.

ROUND 4

Drug addicts needing a fix! That is what 3 weeks with no race meeting does to a man. After Brands Hatch, everyone went their separate way to lick their wounds. There is no doubt that the top third of the Formula Junior drivers were in a different league to impoverished Aussies.

Apart from full time mechanics and "no expense spared" motor racing, the skill of the good guys was a wonder to behold. The level of professionalism sometimes was a bit over the top…some drivers even doing stretching and limbering up in the marshalling area before sliding into their cars.

Bill in the Elfin at Silverstone

But the three week break was put to constructive use with Tony rebuilding his driveline and rear chassis members, Kim had an engine rebuilt, Roger also had a new engine built and redid his suspension settings, and Bill worked on his marriage by taking his wife and two youngest daughters on a jaunt through France. Everyone's efforts were met with mixed levels of success.

Tony seemed to be best sorted and had a trouble-free practice and qualifying at Silverstone. Roger was all over the place like a mad woman's breakfast with his "new" suspension geometry AND blew an oil line off in his second lap, Kim disintegrated a piston in his new engine, and Bill's marriage suffered a serious setback when he pulled into a particularly unsavoury caravan park in Paris with his truck full of females and was frostily told by his wife…"don't ever do this to me again!"

This makes 4,327 things that Deb has told him to never do to her again.

Everyone arrived at Siverstone to unload on the Wednesday night for two private practice sessions on the Thursday. 300 Pounds for two 20 minute sessions on top of the 650 Pound entry fee for the meeting.

Despite going into print in an article for the M and O Newsletter that he would be first to arrive (because he was staying close to Silverstone…and he was sick of being labelled as "always late"), Tony was the last to arrive.

Camp Australia was starting to look a bit more family oriented with Roger and Margaret being joined by their son Adam and his wife and two kids. Kim has added his missus, Marie, to his motorhome where Dave has already staked out his sleeping area. This motorhome is about to become even more interesting when they are joined next week by Marie's (single) girlfriend. Tony kept us intrigued with his tale of his night at a motorway layby with a Yugoslavian semi driver! And Bill was alone (again) after despatching his harem off to a motor racing free zone/home in Melbourne.

Roger in the Koala - with Simmo and Bill behind.

The Siverstone Classic meeting is anything but a motor racing free zone.

Over 900 entries! Formula Junior alone had 65 entries and was oversubscribed for a grid capacity of "only" 55 cars!

The British Grand Prix facilities and track are HUGE. Over 300 trade stands, 5000 classic cars on display, a carnival ground, and live performances from Queen (obviously without the not-quite-alive Freddy Mercury), 10 cc, Suzie Quatro and others over three nights. Plus a large classic/racing car auction. Over 1000 E Types paraded the track to celebrate 50 years since launch, and establish a Quiness Book of Records landmark.

Despite the exhorbitant cost, all were glad of the private practice opportunity on the Thursday. The track is tricky. It has 3 more corners than the human brain can possibly remember, so every lap was a journey of discovery. Experience is vital here, although it appeared very safe, with large run-off areas. Roger benefited the most from private practice, because it gave him time to reconfigure his suspension geometry ready for qualifying the next day.

Friday qualifying saw Roger the best of the famous 4 with a P 34, then Kim in P37, Tony in P 38 and Bill (who should have spent 3 weeks curing his engine miss issues, instead of wasting time trying to make women happy) in P44. The sobering fact was that the leading cars were 20 seconds a lap quicker than the quickest colonial!

Tony Simmonds in the Brabham BT6 in front of Kim Shearn in the Lotus 20/22

Qualifying was early so we had time to attend to our woes before Race 1. Kim (I mean, Dave) replaced a piston, Roger changed his rear suspension yet again, Bill put in a new coil and resistor and Tony met up with John Ellacott and went to the pub. John was busy handing out Tasman Revival invitations for Eastern Creek.

So far, the Innocents Abroad have been blessed with fantastic weather at every circuit, but Friday night at Silverstone, it bucketed down all night. Woke up to a fine but foggy day. Unfortunately, being first race of the day meant the track still had standing water for the 55 Formula Juniors to paddle in. But, unlike many of the Poms, the Aussies stayed on the track. Roger picked up a couple of spots to finish the 30 minute race in P 32. Despite a fluffy engine, Kim moved up to P34. Bill had a good run until the inevitable power loss in the 2nd half of the race and improved 9 places to P 35. Tony suffered from what he described as "cockpit problems" and maintained his qualifying P 38.

In preparation for race 2 the next day, Roger replaced his wheels with 4 Minilites which yet again altered his suspension geometry (he is becoming a 1 trick pony), Kim traced his fluffy bits to plug leads, and Bill still had no idea how to cure his premature end-performance, so instead fitted an on-board fire bomb to keep the FIA scrutineers happy. Tony took his car and disappeared (probably to discuss driving standards and other secret men's business with his new Yugoslavian truck driving friend).

Bill, a study in concentration !

Happily, Sunday proved fine. So 55 Juniors lined up for the last half hour race on a dry track with a rolling start, but no progressive grid.

By the first corner, poor old Kim's Lotus proved the faulty plug leads were actually a rooted cam…a technical term announced by Dave…so Kim had a DNF. Roger and Tony had a slight coming together after good dicing until Roger's marsupial had a spin (must be the suspension settings). Bill survived a biff up the bum to finally finish a race with a strong engine.

The race was described by the commentators and several spectators who came up for a chat, as "the best race ever". The leaders but on a magnificent display of clean driving skill with over 10 changes of lead. Back in the field, we could also vouch for some exciting scraps.

Ultimately, we got to within 15 seconds of the winners best lap time. It shows just how demoralized we had become when we thought this was a great achievement! But this is a seriously tricky circuit and we all felt another meeting would cut 5 to 10 seconds a lap off our "first time" drive at Silverstone. Ultimately, apart from Kim, we had a great race, finishing:
Tony P 23
Roger P25
Bill P31

Next race is at Oulton Park, except for Bill who has to (financially) return home for 6 weeks to work before returning for Goodwood.

The story continues – this time from Tony Simmons.

Hi all,

Following my debacle with a broken driveshaft at Brands Hatch, I scampered back to my Leicestershire base to repair the chassis damage caused by the flailing driveshaft. This involved pulling the motor out and replacing the damaged section by grafting in a chassis diagonal tub. Then, I drove down to Sussex, near Gatwick Airport,to pick up replacement driveshafts , doughnuts, output shafts and sundry hardware which was finished exactly on schedule and exactly to specification. Very impressive work by Peter Denty and Motor Racing Medics, which are good names to note if you are planning a racing program in the UK.

Everything went back together without drama and I had time for a quick test session last Wednesday at Mallory Park which is about 1 kilometer away from my base. It was my first time on the circuit, on which I will be racing on August 21. It's a short circuit, but pretty fast. Not hard to learn at a superficial level, but I'm sure that getting it nailed will be another matter altogether. Unfortunately, I wasn't able to get onto the track at the same time as John Milisivich, who was also testing. John is the current (very) fast guy in UK Formula Junior racing in his Cooper T59. He's a very approachable, unassuming guy, who does all his own preparation, although his motor is prepared by the ace Junior motor builder, Stuart Rolt. Stuart is something of a legend and it was interesting spending time with him. He has a very basic approach to engine building. He uses components which he believes are suitable for the job, not going for the most expensive, exotic stuff unless something standard has a question over it. For example, he uses standard Formula Ford rods in his F.Jr. motors, standard Ford pushrods and so on. He attributes his success simply to attention to detail.

Tony at Silverstone in the Scuderia Veloce livery Brabham BT6.

After spending 30 minutes on the track at Mallory, where the Brabham felt OK , I loaded up and, later in the day, I drove the 60 minutes down to Silverstone, where the gates were opened for competitors in the Silverstone Classic meeting at 7pm. The Classic is almost certainly

the biggest historic race meeting on the planet with ,reportedly, over 800 entries. There were 66 F. Juniors there,all acommodated in what ,prior to this year,used to be the F1 garages. Trailers, motor homes and caravans were parked on the outside of the circuit which occupies a huge area in total. A push bike was a valuable accessory and I was loaned one for the event. It was a bit of an old nail, with a fair layer of rust holding it together, but it worked - the brakes were a bit noisy , but that meant I didn't have to use the (non existent) bell.

On Thursday , there were free practice sessions that were anything but free, at 300 pounds sterling $450) for 2 x 20 minute sessions. First time out on the "new" track - it was only completed earlier in the year - was a bit daunting. It's obviously fast, but what was difficult was the flatness of the place, making it hard to know what corners looked like from the low driving position in a rear engine Junior. Also, the track past the impressive new "Wing" pit complex and the corner following looked almost identical with the track past the Old pits. This took a while to get used to, as did the whole track !

Roger Ealand is getting the unique Koala F.Jr. going better with every meeting and was fastest Aussie in qualifying, with Kim Shearn and yours truly side by side a couple of rows behind. Bill Hemming was a row or two behind us ,so Team Oz were pretty closely grouped, but you needed a pair of binoculars to see the front row guys, and that was before the race started. We are all adhering to the belief that our first priority is to keep the cars in one piece for our arduous race program, so it follows that our speed will suffer - that's our story...

Simmo leading a bunch of cars – is that Bill doing a bit of gardening in the background – no Bill has Elfin wheels – not yellow.

We had a 20 minute race with rolling starts on each of Saturday and Sunday. The heavy rain overnight made for an unbelievably slippery track on Saturday morning (We were first race of the day) The rolling start was pretty chaotic and I had to pull my head in when a car in front lost it under brakes and spun backwards into the pit wall. There was flying debris everywhere including one whole front corner from a Lola. No one was hurt

,luckily. Cars were spinning off all over the place and I decided to make my race a "learning experience". Later, with the kind assistance of the globe trotting John Ellacott, I checked the wheel alignment of the Brabham, suspecting that it might be a good idea, following the repair work on the chassis. It turned out to be a worthwhile exercise, as the car felt much better the next day.

The Sunday race was run in perfect weather and was much more fun. We were all getting to know the circuit and gaining a bit of confidence. Poor Kim Shearn was having major engine problems, going all the way back to our first meeting at Porto. He again burned a piston. A new piston was fitted, but the engine refused to run properly on all 4 cylinders. Kim started the race nevertheless, but it must have been painful driving around with such a sick motor. A worn cam lobe was the culprit.

I had a fun race and caught Roger Ealand late in the race and managed to pass the much improved Koala to finish a couple of spots ahead in midfield. Bill Hemming had his usual scrap with a couple of drivers who are all getting to be good buddies.

Apparently the leaders of our race turned on quite a show, causing one of the announcers to call it one of the best races he had ever seen. The winner of the race, Sam Wilson, was named Driver of the meeting.

Altogether, Silverstone was a memorable event. It's a very demanding, fast circuit and it takes a lot of learning. It was a thrill to run on a current GP circuit and to compete in company with some of the very best cars and drivers in F Jr. and it was mind boggling to see the variety and quality of cars competing generally..

The other members of Team Oz are having a break from racing for a few weeks, but I am going up to Nth Yorkshire next week for a meeting at the Croft circuit, about which I have heard good things. Then, 2 weeks later, I will be voyaging 3/4 of a mile (1.2 km!) down the road for a meeting at Mallory Park.

Kim and Roger and I will run at Oulton Park at the end of August, followed by the big one, Goodwood, on 16 - 18 September, when Bill will rejoin the tour.

More later,

Simmo

Tour at halfway …

Hi all,
I had a few things that i wanted to do to the Brabham after Silverstone. I had noticed that the fastest Juniors were also Juniors with low ride heights, so I tried lowering the front ride height on my Brabham by about 20mm . I am a little reluctant to lower the rear at this stage - it's about right anyway. While I was in a lowering frame of mind, I spent a lot of time reworking the fibreglass seat to get myself further down into the car. This was partly because my knees were hitting the underside of the dash crossmember and also because my head was getting a lot of buffetting at speed on the straights. Another, good, reason was to get the top of my helmet well under the top of the roll over bar. Anyway, after a lot of cutting and shutting, I managed to reshape the seat to accomplish all the above objectives while feeling much more comfortable in the car. I also worked on the chronically problematic clutch - OK when on the track, but murderous around the pits. It was either in, or out, with a very sudden take up, which either stalled the engine or launched the car forward too suddenly for comfort or safety. It has driven me nuts for too long and I decided that, come what may, I would have it fixed by the time I ran at Mallory Park on 21 August. As mentioned in the Silverstone report, Roger, Kim and Bill were taking breaks from racing for a few weeks, so I was the only member of the team doing the Croft (6/7 August) and Mallory Park meetings.

Croft, in North Yorkshire, not far from the Scottish border and almost exactly 3 hours north of my base at Mallory Park, was my next meeting, 2 weeks after Silverstone. Croft is about as different as it could be from Silverstone, being an easy to learn, picturesque circuit with a good mix of fast and slower sections. Just good fun. Shame about the weather ! Saturday racing was rained out until about 4pm. And our race was run quite late in the afternoon on a very slippery track. Lap times were around 30 seconds slower than in the dry. I played it safe but had fun anyway, in company with the well driven front engine Juniors of Brian Mitcham (U2), Stuart Tizzard (Lola Mk2) and Justin Fleming (Elva 100).

Simmo at Croft in the dry.

On Saturday night, the. race organisers turned on a terrific "Pies and Peas" night in a large tent, decorated with chandeliers,no less, and with an excellent band. I had no idea what a Pie and Peas night would be like, but Pies and Peas together are great. It's South Australia's State dish after all - isn't it? Sunday was fine and everyone was keen to get cracking on a dry track. I had already found that the lower driving position made me feel much more comfortable in the car and the lower front ride height seemed to make the car more communicative, so I was looking forward to a bit of a speed too. For once, I got a good start and got busy working my way up through the field, ending up 11th. This was definitely my most enjoyable race of the tour so far. The car is handling better and the circuit is one that everyone, including me, seems to find satisfying. As well, the

organisers put on a great show. Croft, along with many other UK circuits, has a military history and there were displays of WW2 trucks, ambulances,personnel carriers and for good measure a Rolls Royce Griffon aircraft engine, mounted on a special trailer, was started up about once an hour to shake up the punters.

….. and in the damp.

Back at base, I got stuck into the clutch problem and began to make progress when I concentrated on the geometry of the actuation levers and the release bearing's position and contact diameter relative to the diaphragm spring. Once this system was corrected, the clutch pedal pressure was much reduced and engagement was more progressive. Can't believe it, but I think that I'm almost there ! About the only thing left to do is fit a ramp which guides my heel over a chassis tube as I retract my foot when releasing the clutch. At present, the heel of my boot catches on the chassis tube just at the point where the clutch begins to engage. This has been a multi faceted problem....

A couple more Croft photos from Kitty Chisholm.

The Mallory Park meeting on 21 August was a one day (Sunday)event organised by the Vintage Sports Car Club.(VSCC.) Qualifying/practice was 10 minutes and Juniors had one race of 12 laps of the 1.3 mile (2km) track - the UK is still on miles for road distances. I have had several practice sessions on Mallory prior to this meeting. The circuit is open for testing/practice every Wednesday morning and, being just down the road from my base, I have come to know the place quite well, certainly better than any other circuit on the tour. Mallory is deceptively simple but quite fast and has the distinction of incorporating the longest corner on any UK circuit, so I am told. Gerrards is a 4th gear (in a 5 speed car) right hander that goes on forever. It is the sort of corner where the good guys can really strut their stuff, as I found when hammering around it at close to my "comfort velocity", to be overtaken on the outside with the (apparent) greatest of ease by Jon Milicevic in his Cooper T59, holding the car in a beautiful .old fashioned, drift. Great stuff! Jon is the real star of F Jr in the UK, but has recently found a worthy sparring partner in Sam Wilson, also in a T59. Sam won the 12 lapper, with Jon 2nd in

one of the spectacular duels that they seem to turn on every time that they meet these days. I qualified 6th and had a fairly uneventful race to finish 6th. The VSCC is a club for lovers of really old cars. Gigantic engines, chain drives, wooden spoked wheels, lots of oil leaks, exhaust pipes like cannons - all heroic machines, and don't they punt them! Hanging on to steering wheels a yard in diameter,sitting 5 feet above the track, outside gearshift and brake levers, thundering along, getting crossed up, no worries. This is as spectacular as it gets and a must- see for any motor racing enthusiast.

I have withdrawn my entry for the Gold Cup meeting at Oulton Park this weekend, but will go there as a spectator on Sunday and Monday (Public Holiday). I have organised a coaching session at Goodwood on Saturday where I will be given pointers on how to handle Goodwood by Mark Hailes, who is a known Goodwood expert. This will be done in a road car. Another reason for opting out of the Gold Cup meeting is that I needed time for a pretty comprehensive "freshen up" program on the Brabham and I am glad that I decided to do this. My crown wheel and pinion were on the point of failure. Likewise the rear crankshaft thrust bearing was worn badly - a result of the high clutch forces, no doubt. Anyway, I have all the parts that I need and everything will start being reassembled today. I plan a running in, look- see visit to Oulton Park next Friday ,2nd Sept. Not as good as a race meeting, but at least I will get to drive around Oulton Park.A couple of weeks ago we were notified that the Charade circuit at Clermont Ferrand, where we were due to race on 24/25 September, was not going to be available due to non completion of essential works. Spa was touted as an alternative and that was looking probable, but out of the blue, notification was given that the works at Charade were under way and that we would be racing there after all ! Sacre bleu! Is this carry-on the reason that the circuit is called Charade? Anyway, I'm looking forward to visiting Charade for the first time Since I was there in 1972, when Chris Amon had the French Grand Prix almost in his grasp, only to get a puncture and end up 3rd. He still holds the lap record. but first we have the Goodwood Revival meeting, which is the highlight of the tour. Definitely looking forward to that ,but lots of work still to do.

Simmo

INNOCENTS ABROAD - Continued

GOODWOOD 18th September 2011 **Bill Hemming**

The ultimate event! So good that GOD put in an extra O to make it GOOD. So good that Tony organised a lovely lady for the weekend and even arrived on time. So good that even Bill's wife "if it's got tyres or testicles, leave me out of it" Deb said she felt privileged to be there. So good that Kim's main man, Dave, made an effort and wear a tie under his overalls. (It didn't really help). And Kim's missus, Maree, had to dress down to fit in with the dress-ups. So good that even Roger looked and acted tame.

But so much has been written about the Goodwood Revival in the past, that we don't need to go into the details. Suffice to say that Kim's Lotus 20, Tony's Brabham BT6, Roger's Koala Mk1 through to 100, and Bill's Elfin never looked better. But they were still slightly overshadowed by a couple of cars in the event.

We all arrived Wednesday night to unload and beat the rush (smartest move we made all weekend). Setting up "Camp Australia" we had a celebratory drink or two then went to scrape a bit of the froth off the top only to find the campsite showers and toilets didn't work. The girls spoke as one, with the words: "you promised us that this was the best organised event in the world and the bloody toilets don't even work!".
The boys decided there was not a lot they could do about it, so after

a technical discussion on the advantages of the penis for ablution purposes, we had another drink.

Thursday was spent walking around and drooling before going to the pre-briefing cricket match, sitting in the sun, drinking Pims and people spotting. Celebs are a bit thin on the ground at Goodwood, apart from Stirling Moss, Jackie Stewart, Murray Walker, Derek Bell, Rauno Aaltonen, Brian Redman, Vern Schuppan, Jochen Mass, Tiff Needell, Jackie Oliver, Gerhard Berger, Martin Brundle etc, etc, etc, we had to settle for Ken Williams, Peter Brennan, Janis and Michael Hollaway, Bruce Richardson, John Ellacott and other sundry Aussie VIPs including Bob Minogue racing a Norton Manx 500, Greg Snape in the Kieft Climax GP, Peter Harburg with his Brabham BT8 and Laurie Bennett who did Australia very proud in his McLaren M1B.

The driver's briefing was short and to the point (even shorter than Michael Hollaways Philip Island briefings).....1: Don't bend it, 2: You're privileged to be here, 3: Don't bend it, 4: Isn't Lord March absolutely spiffing for putting this show on, 5: I'm Win Percy in charge of driver standards, so 6: Don't bend it.

Over the weekend, several people did bend it. Some quite badly.

Friday was a 20 minute qualifying session at Lunchtime. Tony, Roger and Kim had the luxury of undertaking private tuition and test sessions for this difficult and dangerous circuit the week prior. The practice showed with Tony on P21 and Roger on P22 in a 30 car grid. Bill suffered from a lack of knowledge, skill and gonads (his ex-wife has them hanging off a nail on her kitchen wall) with P27 and Kim's engine misbehaved to put him on P28. Our mediocre performances were put down to the fact that we were here for a good time and we had no interest in being competitive. Truly! In fact, our times were within 10 seconds of the leading cars which was a major improvement from previous tracks.

After qualifying, we raced back to the campervans to shower for the Earl's welcome cocktails at Goodwood house. Bloody showers still had no hot water. It was so cold that Bill's knackers shrank even though they were still in Australia. But the Champers was good and we got to cuddle some bunnies (see photo). All went well until Roger thought a Koala was similar to a Bunny and he tried to mate with one. The Playboy club will never be the same.

Our one and only race was on Saturday afternoon over 20 minutes and 14 laps. Kim had traced his engine miss and was expecting big things, as was Roger who was out to impress his 4 year old grandson and Tony who was probably on an incentive scheme with his blind date. Bill was depressed, unimpressed and unimpressive.

At the drop of the flag, Roger and Bill got ripper starts and picked up over 6 places. Kim got stuffed behind a stalled car and had to work hard to make up a 10 second deficit. Tony started…on time.

After 3 laps, the Elfin rediscovered its' fuel gremlin and cut out whenever the foot was lifted, which dropped Bill back most of the places he had gained from the start. But Kim had indeed got his engine right and put in some good times. He was about to overtake Bob Birrell when Bob had a massive "off"" in his BT6 (see Photo). Tony and Roger had a race-long duel, swapping places with Tony eventually finishing on top with a P19, Roger in P20, Kim in P22 and Bill in a lonely and disappointing P23.

Roger's grandson remained unimpressed with anything outside of a podium finish.

Once again, the Formula Junior race was hailed as the best on the day. The front runners certainly put on a sensational display which we were privileged to witness as they lapped us. The winner, Sam Wilson in a Cooper T59, was awarded Driver of the Meeting with a gold Rolex.

After the race, we had to dress up for the black tie dinner party. A hot shower would have been nice, but they still weren't working! The evening was yet another typical Goodwood understated event, with a Barbarella/Space theme, 1500 guests, lots and lots and lots of expensive drinks served by about 300 little waiters who were meant to look like space aliens in white skin-tight outfits and silver bathing caps. Unfortunately they more resembled frantic sperm, dashing about in a haphazard fashion. But add acrobats and buskers, prawns and venison, pyrotechnics and laser lighting. Then David Bowie performed on stage! It will be interesting to see how this event will go when England gets out of its' deep recession.

Sunday was spent stall shopping, race watching and waiting for hot water in the showers. It really was like post war Britain. A real highlight was an air show by 10 Spitfires and the Memphis Belle Boeing Bomber. Absolutely surreal!

We watched Tony try to get into the pits to load up at 7.30pm. After 2 hours sitting stationary in a queue, Tony joined us with a 2 hour nap and we drove straight in at 11 pm, loaded and said goodbye to a truly wonderful experience, even with the shite shitehouses.

Bob Birrell had a pretty bad accident in his BT6 during the Junior race. John Ellacott got the last of it on video, but unfortunately not the beginning. I have corresponded with Bob after a comment he made about padding and how it might help any of us in a similar accident, but his reply indicated we might all need to add a few kilos! What Bob did say though was he owes not suffering more injuries to the strength of the car designed into it by Ron Tauranac. Bob has been in the armed forces for many years and runs Army Motorsport.

The quote of the weekend came from Ernie Nagamatsu, the Japanese owner/driver of the famous US Buick special "Ol Yeller". It's a beast. When asked what it's like to drive, Ernie says he considered having a "round eye operation" to appear more American, but when he drives "Ol Yeller", it has the same effect. (Ernie wants an invite to come to Phillip Island…he and his car would be an asset.)

Ernie Nagamatsu at the 2006 Tasman Revival, Ernie has been to all three now. – Peter Schell photo.

Monday morning, we hotfooted up to Milton Keynes, where Bill's Pommie mate, Martin had pulled some strings to get us into Red Bull. Tony rang at 1 o'clock to say he was late (fair dinkum) and couldn't make it because he was having a haircut, or wrapping Christmas presents, or changing a wheel bearing, or something. We had to rope in a stray wife to make up the numbers.

After a personal greeting from Christian Horner, we had the most amazing 2 and a half hour tour of the design studio (120 designers) who translated Adrian Newey's hand drawings into production CAD programs, the model makers who built the 60% scale models for wind tunnel testing, the rapid prototyping guys with the most extraordinary photo synthesising equipment to build 3D items, mould making and the climate controlled, sterile carbon fibre laying

room, the race day remote control room (just like NASA), then the gearbox division for a chat with the technicians, finishing at the room where the cars were rebuilt after each race and a special pit stop practice set up. Mark Webber was having a session in the simulator and couldn't make it out in time to see us.

Just goes to show what an annual budget of over 100 million pounds will get you. Over 530 employees, and a World Championship. The enthusiasm of the entire work force was palpable.

That's it for the UK. Now off to the Circuit de Charade at Claremont Ferrand in the middle of France. Except for Roger who is going to Spa for a 6 hour sports car race with his son Adam in a TR3A Triumph. We continue to lead a charmed life..

Goodwood and Clement Ferrand

Hi all.
A couple of weeks before Goodwood, on the recommendation of my UK Formula Junior friend ,Justin Fleming, I arranged to spend a day at Goodwood having instruction from an acknowledged Goodwood expert, Mark Hales. Paul Hamilton, in the UK on his way to Geneva for an FIA historic conference, came along for the day. I obtained a 1.6 litre diesel Ford Focus manual for this exercise and it proved to be perfect for the job. Mark did a few laps to show me the way round and then it was my turn to drive , with Mark in the passenger seat giving me pointers on lines, technique, braking points etc.

Tomy at the chicane after learning the circuit from Mark Hales.

Goodwood is usually described as a fast circuit on which you can get into trouble if you get wheels on the grass, there being relatively short run off areas on some of the faster corners. Yes, it is fast and it certainly wouldn't be good to get on the grass at the exit of Fordwater corner, which is flat out in 5th in a Junior, especially if the grass was wet. I never

explored that eventuality. However, it is a great circuit to drive, with a wonderful flow and really interesting corners like Madgwick, which has a double apex, a big dip in the middle and short run offs ending in solid banks. That said, it is a fascinating corner which feeds onto the long straight through Fordwater to St Mary's. A good exit from Madgwick is therefore critical for a good lap time. Mark showed me his line and ,after a few laps, it felt comfortable to enter the corner virtually flat in 4th in the Focus. And so it went for all the corners on the circuit. It was an enjoyable and valuable experience. Lest one think that a humble Focus diesel was hardly the car in which to drive fast laps at Goodwood, with Mark driving, we caught and passed an Aston Martin DB9 at one point. At the end of the day, I took Paul around for a few laps and he noticed that we were doing an indicated 105mph in 4th through Fordwater. Great little car....On the Wednesday in the week before the big meeting, there was a competitors' practice day and I took the Brabham along to Goodwood, where I was met by Norma and Michael Henderson, who had just arrived back in the UK after one of their motorhome tours in Europe . The Focus experience definitely helped ,but I was back on a learning curve in the Brabham, particularly as it was a really windy day. The little Brabham was blown about by the crosswind , particularly when coming out of the wind shadow of the pits when it moved about half a metre to the left. But for a bigger thrill, Fordwater was a real challenge as the car goes light as it goes over the crest of a long, shallow dip, flat in 5th.

Kim in the Lotus at the Chicane.

That required one's full attention when the car touched down. However, the car finished the day in good shape and I felt that I had prepared as best I could for the meeting the following week. I got to Goodwood on Wednesday afternoon and set up camp alongside the Ealands, Shearns and Hemmings in the competitors" car park in a field alonside the circuit. On Thursday, which was a set-up day, I changed the ratios in my gearbox to include a newly purchased 5th gear, along with a higher 2nd, to enable a better exit from the chicane. On Thursday evening, following the traditional cricket match in the grounds of Goodwood house, there was a drivers' briefing in a large, but overflowing tent. My brother Rod arrived from Canada during the day. Max Brunninghausen and his son Nick also arrived from Australia. Other welcome faces were Bruce Hoskins from Sydney, who has helped me on my car in Oz, with his wife Vicky and daughter Sophia. Bruce's assistance over the weekend was much appreciated Friday was timed practice day and I qualified (P21) just in front of Roger Ealand (P22) with Bill in P27 and Kim ,with engine problems, in P28. There were 30 cars in the field, so I guess that we felt that we could have/should have done a bit better. Things got better when I was joined by an English lady friend, Jenny Treherne, when we attended the Cocktail Party at Goodwood House in the evening and watched a brilliant display of close quarter, formation aerobatics by a pair of Spitfires, right in front of us as we stood on the steps of magnificent Goodwood House. Lord March certainly knows how to throw a party. Saturday was race day for us and at around 4.30

we were called to the marshalling area where we had a group photo session before having a final briefing by the clerk of the course. Then it was into the cars at last and out onto the circuit for the warm-up lap. The start was with the union jack of course. As usual, I didn't get a great start, but Roger Ealand, alongside me, got a screamer and blew past me and several others like we were standing still. I managed to get on his tail through Madgwick and followed him around for the first lap, and the 2nd ,and the 3rd etc. Roger was leaving no holes and I it was probably lap 8 before I got him , only to run wide in St Marys (which is one of 2 left handers on the circuit, the exit from the chicane being the other) and let him get past me again I felt that this shouldn't have happened and the car felt strange around this corner for the rest of the race ,as it did on the exit from the chicane. I managed to get past Roger a second time when I slipstreamed him along Lavant Straight and got him under brakes into Woodcote corner. I managed to open out a bit of a lead on Roger by the end of the race and ended up in 19th place with Roger P20, Kim P22 and Bill P23. When we checked the car after the race , we found that the right hand front wheel bearing had collapsed and the wheel was effectively loose. This was why the car was weird on Left hand corners. Nevertheless, I enjoyed the race and the dice with Roger. He has the Koala going

Roger in the Koala just ahrad of Simmo.

well now and it looks good from close quarters out on the track. Our race finished late in the day and Jenny and I had to rush back to my caravan at the campsite so that we could get cleaned up and dressed up for the big Saturday night party for competitors and their guests (1 per competitor). This year the theme for the party was Barbarella, Space Age or Black tie. I didn't happpen to have a space age outfit with me and Jenny likewise with a Barbarella get up, so we were among the majority in black tie. The party was held in a giant tent, not that you would have known. It was decorated as a space age disco and ,when the music started, the singer guy started doing pretty good versions of classic David Bowie material. It was later that someone told me that it was, in fact, David Bowie. As I say, Lord March throws a good party.

On Sunday, we could relax, having had our one and only race for the meeting. The weather, which up until Sunday morning had been very pleasant, started to get a bit showery. This didn't greatly affect the enjoyment of the meeting. I watched my mentor of a few weeks earlier ,Mark Hales, sharing Nick Mason's Ferrari 250 GTO with Martin Brundle, chase a Cobra Daytona coupe driven by Kenny Brack and multi le Mans winner, Tom Kristensen. The GTO finished a close second to the Cobra in a great ,wet race. Later 10 Spitfires took off from the circuit (which was a fighter base in the Battle of Britain) and flew in formation for about 20 minutes. It wasn't difficult to imagine that this would have been a

daily sight and sound in 1940 and we were privileged to see it replayed more than 70 years later on a much happier occasion. Bruce and I had a look at the wheel bearing and without proper tools ,there was no way we could repair it at the track, so we bolted it back together so that the car could be loaded at the end of the meeting. Goodwood rules are that cars must remain in their assigned places until the end of the meeting. The only problem was that everyone tried to get in to load up at the same time and an unholy traffic jam developed. We gave up and went off to have dinner to let the traffic clear.

The Koala attracting a lot of attention, or was it they all knew Roger was at the wheel !

At about 11pm Max, Nick and I went back to the circuit to get the car and all my "Stuff". I had a lot of "stuff" already in my van, so we had to unload that in order to load the Brabham. All told, we finally got out of the circuit at 1am and I eventually got back to my base for the weekend at 2am Monday. I was booked to catch the Wednesday ferry to France for the meeting at Clermont Ferrand the following weekend, so that after a few hours' sleep, I got on the job of finding someone who could fix my front wheel bearing assembly straight away. Luckily, Motor Racing Medics, said that they could do it and I raced to get the car to them. I was due to visit Red Bull Racing, with the Oz team, early on Monday afternoon,but ,in the event ,I ran clean out of time and missed out on the visit, which was hugely disappointing. Our schedule is very tight and doesn't leave much time for maintenance and repair of our cars. It can be a trial.

Anyway, I made it onto the ferry to France and travelling in convoy with Justin Fleming, we drove down through central France, arriving at the Circuit de Charade, Clermont Ferrand on Thursday afternoon. C.F. is the capital city of the Massif Central region, set among steep volcanic terrain. From the city, in a picturesque valley, it is about 20 minute's drive up the side of a mountain to the location of the circuit. The circuit winds around through dense forest in some places, open meadows in others and has to be one of the most beautiful racing venues in the World. The track is much shorter now than it was when it was used for the French Grand Prix back in the early 70's. Possibly because of the reduction of the lap distance, the circuit now has a large number of 2nd gear corners and only one fastish 4th gear corner shortly

after the start line. There are 2 straights, steeply downhill, followed by hairpin bends, so that you need confidence in your brakes. I changed ratios in my gearbox, removing the Goodwood gears which were way long for Charade, but I would have had to change them again if I wanted to get them right. They were still too long and I was either buzzing the engine from one second gear corner to another ,or going up a gear for 30 metres then going down again. Getting it right would make the circuit much more fun. During qualifying on Saturday morning I ended up in 8th place. Kim Shearn was fastest Oz in an excellent 4th place . Bill Hemming was 9th. Roger Ealand was racing with his son at the Spa 6 hours meeting.

From the Formula Junior Historic Racing Association website .
http://www.formulajunior.com/Events/Events2011/UK_Championship/Photos/Charade_Photos.html

In Race 1 late on Saturday ,I got a screamer of a start when the lights went out about 1 second after the 5 second board was shown. Such a screamer, in fact, that I freaked, thinking that something was dead wrong because no one else I could see was moving. So I backed off and immediately got swamped by half the field as I struggled along with the motor off the cam. The French guy alongside me on the grid came up to me later and apologised, saying that he "fell asleep" on the grid and that he was sorry if put me off! Anyway, I had a very well driven U2 buzzing around me for a few laps before I got stuck in and drew away finishing where i had started in 8th. The second race ,on Sunday was better. I got a better start and managed to keep the third and 4th guys in sight for a few laps but was being monstered by my "sleepy" French mate ,who had woken up and was giving me heaps. I managed to open out a lead on him and began to catch sight of Kim Shearn up ahead ,but a few gear changing mistakes dropped me back into the sights of M. Sleepy, who had a big lunge at me on the last corner of the race and spun. I think that I ended up 6th. Kim scored a very good 4th. Altogether, a fun meeting and a chance to drive on an interesting old style circuit - they don't make them like this anymore.

I will drive down through South Eastern France and cross over into Italy near Monaco in the next few days. I will aim to get to Imola as soon as the circuit is opened, maybe on Wednesday next week. I want to give the Brabham a check over, especially the gearbox, which has caused me a bit of trouble. After Imola, it is 2 weeks to Portomao in Southern Portugal, then back to the UK to pack the cars into their container for the trip back to Oz. I will fly back to Oz on about 3rd November for a bit of a rest ! . . . .

Simmo

The Next Instalment ---

On Monday morning after the Clermont Ferrand meeting, I said my farewells to Max and Nick Brunninghausen- They were to drive north to Paris to catch a flight back to Oz on Tuesday. It was great having their company and Max left me with instructions on the most spectacular way to get to the South of France, where I was planning to cross into Italy on my way to Imola, for the next meeting on the tour.The first night I stopped at Sisteron, which is a small town dominated by a huge, ancient, citadel which effectively controlled the only pass through the mountains in the region. I stayed in Sisteron for a couple of days, playing the tourist and catching up on some sleep. The next feature of the Brunninghausen itinerary was to drive the justly famous Route Napolean, towards the South of France. This fantastic road is a scenic tour de force, as long as you don't mind driving around mountain sides with a barely adequate looking guard rail between you and a 1000+ metre vertical drop.Just grip the steering wheel a little tighter and don't look down. Funnily enough, after a while, it doesn't seem so bad and becomes almost enjoyable. Thanks Max! When the country flattened out a bit, I stopped for a coffee out on the verandah of a little place at a crossroads. There must have been some sort of big classic car rally going on ,because a fantastic array of machinery, ranging from pre-war Bugattis and Alfas through to a new McLaren MP4 -12C, went hurtling by for what seemed like an hour. Fabulous sights and sounds - they weren't mucking

around. I got going again and headed down towards Nice and about this time, my new GPS stopped working. This wasn't a problem in the countryside, but as I went down the hills towards Nice , I realised that arriving in that area at around peak hour wasn't going to be fun. Once in Nice, I started asking people how to get to Menton, the last French town before the Italian border. Cut a long story short, I eventually ended up on the spectacular A8 autroute climbing over and through the coastal mountains. It's a great road, but it requires one to stop at a toll booth every 10 minutes or so. This wouldn't be so bad if you are in a left hand drive car, but is a pain in the back end if, like me, one is driving a big, tall, right hand drive, van. Then, as you approach a toll gate, you have to check that it has (1) cash or card payment available (2) that there is enough headroom in the gateway and (3) that the gateway is open. Then you drive into the gateway, stop just before the boom, get out of the van, run around to the left hand side, put your previously obtained ticket into the toll machine , then your credit card. If you get it all right, the boom will elevate and you scurry round to the RHS of the van, climb in and take off. Bloody hell!

There is one relevant issue here which I should mention. Before leaving Sydney in June, I was advised to obtain a debit card loaded up with Euros, for trouble-free European payments. As it turns out, the card I obtained, (Travelex, issued by HSBC) is not accepted by the toll machines on any pay roads that I have been on in almost 5 months and, even worse, it s not accepted in any ATM I have tried …… Enough said. .

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I eventually I arrived at my hotel in Menton, where I planned to spend a few days lolling about and buying another GPS! Can't live without it. It's fine and in some ways preferable, to not use it if you know your basic route through the countryside, but ,get to a decent sized town and you can get totally lost in no time flat. Another point to mention - if you are getting a GPS for use in the UK, make sure to get one which will work on postcodes. UK postcodes are specific for every street address in the country which makes navigating a breeze. I could have used that feature on the day, back in June, when we went down to Essex, in London, to unload our container. The street address was impossible - post code would have taken me straight there. . .

I don't appear to have mentioned it earlier, but I decided to leave my caravan in the UK and not use it for this ,second, European foray. My reasoning was that I was down to stay at the same hotel as Max, Nick and a lot of F Jr. friends in Clermont Ferrand, plus, for the last meeting of the tour,at Portimao in Portugal, the race organisers offered us 4 nights' accomodation in a 5 star hotel. For the remaining couple of weeks, I decided that it would make for easier driving and less fuel consumption to not use the caravan, especially given the number of kilometres we will cover in this last stage of the tour. .

From Menton, I drove to Modena, which I last visited in 1988. My first impression on crossing the border into Italy was the number of trucks on the road and it wasn't long before I got caught out when a truck had moved about a metre into my lane before his indicator flashed. That incident made me glad that I had fitted new discs and pads to the Transit before I left the UK. All told, I had several incidents with trucks, mostly when they come across into your lane and squeeze you for room against the Armco. The problems, which every one of us seemed to have had, appear to stem from the sheer number of trucks ,especially on the autostrada from Imola towards Milan. I reckon there are stretches where trucks occupy the right hand lane ,nose to tail, less than a truck length apart, for kilometres on end. This must tend to make the drivers insane. Also, you can't always get a sight on ,say, a road closure in the truck lane, so, suddenly they start coming across on you. After a while, I learned not to overtake lines of trucks unless there were 2 clear lanes outside the trucks. .

I stayed a couple of days just south of Modena in a semi rural area before heading the 100km or so down to Imola on the Wednesday before the race meeting, hoping that the circuit might be open ,so that I could unload my car to look at a couple of issues that showed up at Clermont Ferrand.. The circuit appeared to be totally deserted. On Thursday.I could hear cars on the circuit - the entrance to the circuit is right in the heart of Imola, no more than 10 minutes' walk from the hotel I was staying at. So , I drove to the circuit and outside the pit garages, there was an impressive collection of road cars, mostly Porsches , but also Lamborghinis, Ferraris and a lone Alfa 8C among many others. I approached some of the people with the cars and soon learned that it was a track day for a Munich car club. So, I moved a short distance away and unloaded the Brabham and started work on it. The tacho wasn't working, following a missed shift and over rev ,also at Clermont. I soon found the cause of that problem and was able to fix it without too much trouble.. While I was at it ,I hooked up a rev limiter which I had fitted before Goodwood, but didn't use as I wanted to keep the

car exactly as it had been and not introduce anything new and unfamiliar for Goodwood. After the monumental over rev at Clermont, I realised that I was dead lucky not to have damaged the engine and played it safe by making the rev limiter operable. It worked perfectly as it turned out, holding exactly the revs that I set it at. With the tacho a slightly unknown quantity, having the rev limiter working was reassuring. On Friday, which was a set up day, with no track activity and I changed my gear ratios back to the ones I had used Goodwood, which turned out to be perfect. The gear change, which appeared to be pretty crunchy at Clermont was fine, so I was about ready to go. The sky looked pretty black so I started to erect my Ez Up awning when a pretty violent wind storm hit and I nearly took off while trying to hold the damn thing down. The canopy tore off and luckily hooked itself on a barbed wire fence, while the frame was buckled in a couple of places . Then the rain and lightning started and for about an hour we had torrential rain ,thunder, lightning, even slushy ice. About an hour later, it all cleared and the rest of the meeting was run in beautiful warm weather. Saturday was quite busy. We had "Free" practice (130 Euros for about 7 laps) which was the first run on the track for any of us. First impressions were that it was going to be a fantastic circuit, once you got the hang of it. The main straight is long and ends in the infamous Tamburello corner, where Ayrton Senna was killed. Except that, whereas in the old days it must have been a terrifyingly fast left hand sweeper, now it is a 3rd gear chicane. In fact there are 3 quite tight chicanes per lap. One circuit map I saw shows a 4th chicane about 1/3rd of the way down the main straight, so it is not the circuit it was. Nevertheless it is still close to being the most enjoyable circuit we have raced on. It has a lot of elevation changes and some really interesting corners on the high side of the circuit ,on the opposite side from the main straight. After free practice, we had qualifying and Pierre Tonetti (Brabham BT6)was predictably fastest. Pierre takes his racing very seriously and really throws his car round. He also benefits by being significantly quicker on the straights than any one else. 8kph quicker than the next closest guy and a rousing 23kph quicker than the quickest Oz car, Roger Ealand's Koala and 33kph quicker than your humble scribe. I knew I was down a bit on power , but.....! Anyway, I qualified 11th, just behind Kim Shearn on 10th, Roger Ealand 13th and Bill Hemming 15th. We then had a drivers' briefing which was the wierdest one yet. It was 100% in Italian and hadn't been going for very long when it was obvious that 2 of the Italian drivers had a fairly major blue going and the meeting descended rapidly into chaos, before being closed down - Fantastic entertainment, but not all that enlightening for the non Italiano"s. I went up to Tommaso Gelmini, who has become a particular friend of the Aussie camp and asked him if there was anything significant that we needed to take away from the briefing and he replied that, at the start, there would be 5 red lights going on in sequence and when they all went out, we started. That's it - but it was fun.

Our Saturday race duly started when the lights went out. Kim Shearn got a good start and I, as usual ,got a shocker and trailed Kim, Bill hemming and Roger Ealand into the first lap. I managed to get Bill fairly early and likewise Roger , then set off after Kim who was quite a way ahead. I managed to catch him with about 4 or 5 laps to go and it took a few laps to get past him, on the last lap. I finished 6th ,Kim 7th, Bill 10th. Roger struggled around to finish 22nd with a Koala in need of a vet. This race was scheduled for a 5.30 pm start, when the sun was low on the horizon and shining straight into drivers' eyes on the main straight. I could only see on the straight by holding my hand in front of my eyes and when we approached Tamburello, it was a case of braking conservatively, getting into the right gear (3rd) and waiting until you could see the corner. It was a bit hit and miss, but most made it through OK. There was oil on the circuit virtually all weekend and it may have been the oil which claimed our good friend Anthony Goddard in his Tojiero F Jr. He ended up hitting the Left Hand fence in Tamburello and doing quite a lot of heavy damage to the car. Anthony was thankfully OK.

Sunday's race for me was oil, oil and more oil, unless it was petrol which was spewing from the Dolphin FJr. in front of me off the start. I decided that this was going to be a conservative race after a couple of big slides and I was given a present when Kim Shearn who had passed me earlier, spun in the climbing left hander (Tosa) Anyway, I ended up 7th after a good dice with a Formula 3 screamer. Kim was 8th, Bill was 10th and Roger had ongoing problems to be non classified as a finisher. This is probably my best result of the tour and we have all improved our performances as we have gained experience. The next, and last, meeting of our tour is at Portimao in the Algarve region, right down south. It's about 2,500 km from Imola and we have about 10 days to do the trip, so it shouldn't be too strenuous. However, it will get strenuous on the Sunday of the meeting, when we have to pack up and leave the circuit straight after our race and head 800kms north to Bilbao in Spain, to catch the ferry to the UK. Immediately on arrival there, we have to hurry up to High Wycombe to load our container for the return trip to Oz. Then ,it's a huge sigh of relief followed by a few beers, I reckon. . .

Simmo

Well that's it for this issue.

Tony Simmons and Bill Hemming have done a fabulous job of describing their experiences, and just might inspire a few more of us to follow them. Immense thanks to to Kitty Chisholm for allowing us to see what they have been up to with her images.

As usual one more photo ….

Showing the lunchtime race on Saturday … the blue car is the Brabham BT2 of Graham Brown. Graham brings this car all the way from Queensland and hardly ever misses a Wakefield Park meeting.