

MG Racing South Australia

South Australian Circuit Racing will enter a new era in the Centenary year of the MG marque, with The Bend and the Sporting Car Club of SA joining forces to run the SA Motor Racing Championships together in 2024. Events will be held at both Mallala Motorsport Park and Shell V-Power Motorsport Park's International & GT circuits.

As a result of the new partnership, the SA Motor Racing Championships season will now increase from four events to eight, to ensure that each category will have the opportunity for five rounds, when combined with a number of new categories including the incoming Australian Formula 4 Championship, the Toyota 86 Scholarship Series and visiting interstate series such as the NSW Production Sports and Victorian BMW E30 Racing.

MG Racing and invited British sports cars will launch on 1-3 March at Tailem Bend, with strong interest being expressed both locally and from interstate. A special entry fee and tow money have been arranged for this round – see flyer included with this magazine. Other categories include the visiting AROCA Alfa Romeo Racing Series, the NSW Production Sports and the new MARC cars, which are just awesome. To help keep the costs down and if the opportunity arose, would any MGCC SA member be interested in billeting an interstate driver? This will be a 'Showcase' event for our category and numbers are REALLY important, even as a spectator - wearing something MG of course!

Round 2 on 3-5 May is not only Round 2 of the Victorian MG race series, but also the opening round of the FIA sanctioned Asia Pacific Formula 4 Championship. The meeting is expected to be covered by Blendline TV and streamed live (yet to be confirmed), as Formula 4 drivers from across the Asia Pacific seek to gain FIA points towards obtaining a Formula 1 licence. Early indications are that 11 Victorian competitors will be joining us on the grid.

Round 3 will be at Mallala on 2-4 August, where we will join with the SA Prototypes, SA Improved Production, SA Sports Sedans and a collection of tin tops. Interstate support for our category for this event is unlikely. The entry fee will be standard for a Mallala event; however, I am working on trying to secure free garaging.

Round 4 is The Bend Classic 6-8 September, which is also the same weekend as the Goodwood Revival in the UK. A lot is being planned to make this a VERY special event – but I can't say more at this time. Suffice to say MG Racing will be a very neat fit with the theme. There may even be an opportunity to engage with the whole MGCC SA in the form of a major car display, with a couple of selected vehicles finding their way inside the Visitor Welcome Centre! This round is also a round of the Victorian MG Racing Series, meaning that on-track numbers will be up, so we will really make our presence felt. Once again, Blendline TV is expected to cover the event, meaning online streaming of all of our races.

Now then ... one important difference between circuit racing and rallying, is the carrying of passengers / navigators. This needs to be borne in mind for Round 5, which will be held on 22-24 November on the 35 corner 7.77km GT Circuit, the second longest permanent racing circuit in the world. This is the only time the GT Circuit will be used in 2024, so it's certainly a round not to miss.

As we move towards our opening round, I can only hope that a review of our first meeting is slightly better than the review of South Australia's first ever motor race at Morphettville Racecourse on Saturday 12 November 1904.

The Register (Adelaide, SA: 1901 - 1929) Monday 14 November 1904 p 7

"A motor Derby is a new spectacle for South Australians, and there was quite a Continental atmosphere about Morphettville Racecourse on Saturday afternoon, when the Automobile Club held its first meeting in aid of charitable institutions. One has to develop a taste for this form of amusement, and the public will require considerable education before the appreciation of the novelty shall grow into the frenzied enthusiasm of European gatherings.

The racing on Saturday afternoon was fairly interesting. Even by the kindest critic the fixture could not be regarded as a complete success, but the officials are not to be blamed for the fact, that the excitement never rose above zero."

Clearly, there were no MGs racing!!