



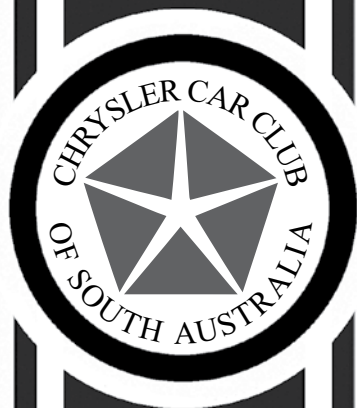
Torqueback

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE CHRYSLER CAR CLUB OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA



MOTORSPORT





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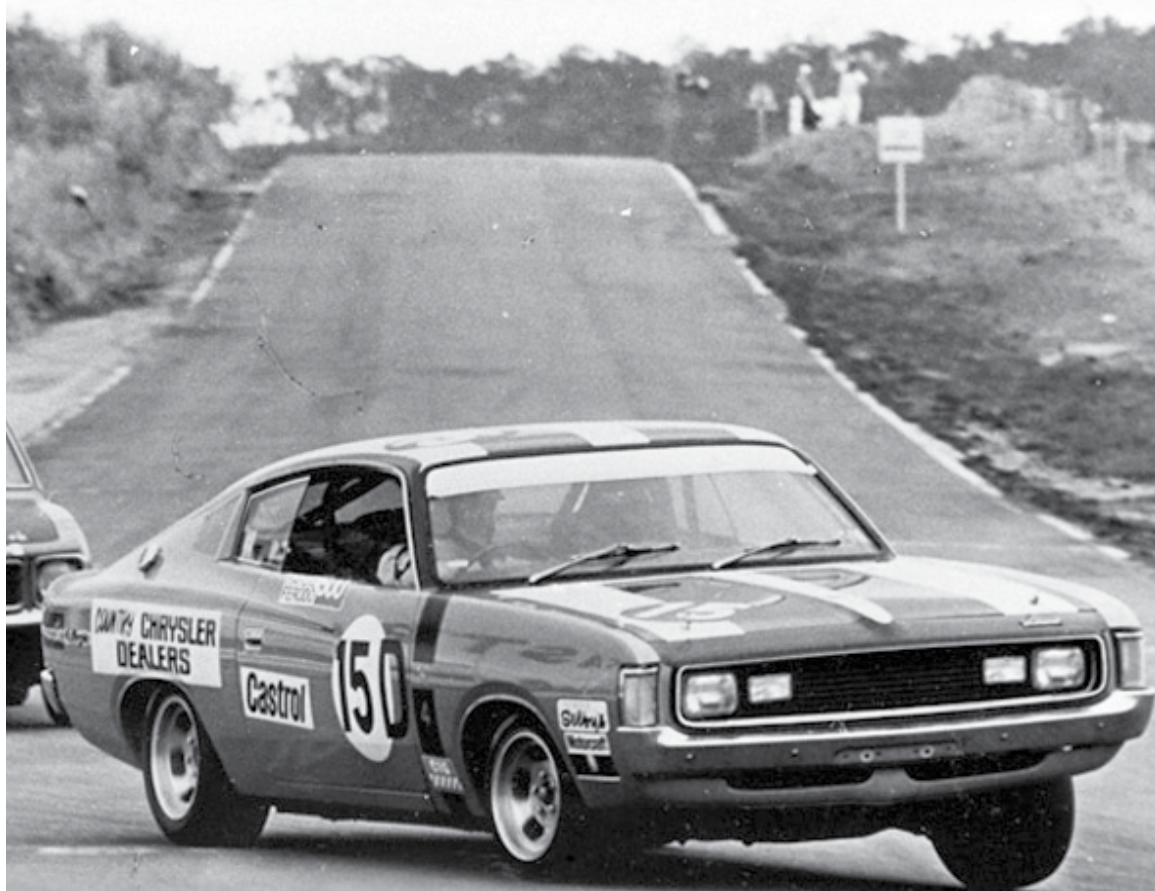
DECEMBER 2012 - FEBRUARY 2013



All correspondence should be sent to:
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PO Box 240
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General Meetings are held every second Tuesday of every month at:
Model T Clubrooms
Port Road
Croydon
(directly opposite Officeworks)

Membership Fees
Regular - \$20.00 per year (& quarterly magazine)
Historic Registration - \$30.00 per year (& quarterly magazine)



G'day. Welcome to Issue 15 of the 'new' Torqueback, and in light of recent successful events such as Mopar Mania, perhaps appropriately themed **Motorsport**.

So what do I know about motorsport? Well, actually very little.

Like most Adealaideans, I go to Clipsal and enjoy a Bathurst barbie, but I really don't get to see much. For a while I drew a cartoon strip for **AutoAction** magazine, but I lost that gig when it became increasingly apparent to the editors I wasn't terribly informed as a fan – back then I didn't even know what a 'Barbagello' (sic) was! You see I wasn't all that interested about a purely Ford versus Holden phenomena – "so where are all the Chryslers?" Although at Mopar Mania recently, I did I remember just how much I love to watch drag racing (something I used to do as a kid with my father). But as we all know, unfortunately that well often has run dry in Adelaide.

Hopefully with the vision and effort of someone like **Rino D'Alfonso** that'll change for the better. Thanks to him, I'm going back again to A.I.R, I can tell you.

And what do I know about Chrysler in motorsport? Even less!

I might occasionally tune into NASCAR on channel One to barrack for the Dodges, although they never seem to win. And I remember the toy cars and model kits of my childhood based on Mopar drag cars from the States, but my knowledge there is probably as limited as my mechanical aptitude.

But the great thing about editing our club mag, and for that matter being in the club itself, is how you learn stuff. Lots of interesting stuff. Well beyond my own particular personal obsession with late model Valiant hardtops anyhow.

Of course first stop, there is a mass of interesting history and facts and figures on the internet. Whether it be a major website such as **Allpar.Com**, or the **Hemi6Pack** forum. But through the club you can directly meet people – people who do know, who can teach you things. All about Mopars, and cars in general. For me it might be someone like **Jaf**, our venerable **president** (who just loves his burnout competitions, doesn't he?) or even a **Simon Lazarevskis**, who has helped me make up some lost ground in mechanics and car racing. Mind you, I'm still only a novice and there's such a long, long way to go...

But I love my Mopars. And our Chryslers have a vast heritage in motorsport, which has directly influenced how and where our marque has evolved, as well as motoring in general, itself.

And not just with famous cars or racing car drivers. Look up some of the notable engineers like **Keith Black** (who I was going to write about alongside **Ed Donovan** in this issue but I ran out of room, sorry). Mopar's impact upon the greater motoring world is fascinating and amazing. Chrysler is just as important, equally as significant, as the General or Henry.

OK, now for some thanks.

To **Andy Radloff** for his comprehensive round-up of **Mopar Mania**, and to **Dane Childs** of **Armageddon Designs** (see www.armageddondesigns.com) for allowing me to use his artwork.

To **Lesley Little**, who photography has become a regular feature of this magazine. This photographer is a club member and does this as a hobby. Check out her website at littlegemphotography.smugmug.com if you'd like to view additional photos she took at Mopar Mania to maybe purchase. Also thanks to



rodger **John Antinow** (visit **9000RPM Photography** on Facebook) who continues to donate his services as a professional snapper. I also borrowed some snaps from T.A.D Photography (see www.tadphotos.com) and Autopics (see www.autopics.com.au). Some fantastic captures of our cars in action there.

OK, so the year is now almost done and it's time to start thinking about All Chrysler Day. Remember members, this is **your** club so **All Chrysler Day** is as much **your** responsibility as it is the All Chrysler Day committee's. They do an incredible job, but they need everyone's help, so please volunteer your services – to make sure our show continues to be respected as one of the oldest and most famous Mopar events in Oz. Don't be slack and just leave everything to the same old faces.

Merry Xmas and Happy New Year.

Cheers,
Dave H





Welcome to the gas guzzling, tyre frying action packed December issue of this fantastic publication by **your** Club. I have been associated with the

CCCSA since the mid 90's and I am blown away by the change that I have seen in all that time. Within the Chrysler cruising scene, racing, the club itself and the social activities that occur around this social car scene.

I still have my copy of the CCCSA's **Torqueback** from the 90's that lists all the club members, cars they own, addresses and phone numbers! You couldn't have done that in the last ten years with the change in privacy laws, car values etc.

I wonder how many of you would remember the Bay car park at the end of Anzac Highway?

...Well, for me those were fun times and often a bit crazy, but a lot has changed since then and I am glad to say many friendships from the early Chrysler club and Chrysler cruise nights still remain. I still see a lot of these seasoned and diehard Chrysler "nuts" in the club and in the local

scene. Often we have old faces not seen in quite a while come back to join the club and its at those times that I feel proud to have remained close to the club and my car loving friends. We are all so different but the one thing we all are passionate about unites us and makes the club a strong but diverse organisation.

All the best for the Christmas season and I hope you reach your goals and dreams in 2013! I am definitely excited about the year ahead and what it may bring.

The All Chrysler day 2013 committee is in a busy stage and I thank the sub committee and their leader - Events Coordinator **Jason Rowley** for their fantastic efforts !!!!

What a great club we have !!!

Raddy

Dirt racing, anyone?



adrian brien automotive

PRINCIPLE SPONSOR OF THE CHRYSLER CAR CLUB OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA



Hi all. This year has moved very quickly!

We headed up to Queensland for a couple of months to visit our family, where the weather was warmer, which is just starting to move to Adelaide.

In November, we met with the **Chrysler Restorers** for a run to Second Valley, meeting at the Old Tonsley Park plant where quite a few Chryslers felt at home again in the car park. We left around 10 o'clock and cruised to Myponga for coffee and cake at the Myponga Markets, before cruising onto Second Valley for lunch at Leonard's Inn, where the meal and service were first class, just like all the cars that were parked out front for all to view. A big thankyou to **Tony** and **Karen** for organizing another great day to run our Vals along with the Restorers.

The ACD for 2013 is looking more and more organised, with quite a few new sponsors and caterers coming on board. Looking forward to what should be a great family weekend, with the Mega Cruise and Barby on Saturday the 23rd February and then on Sunday 24th of February judging and display of Mopars at Urrbrae College. We are receiving quite a few magazines from other Chrysler Clubs Australia wide, which are quite informative of their events and happenings, so don't forget they are available for all members to read at our meetings.

On the 1st of December we had our annual Xmas run. **Robyn** and **Marg**, **Rob** and **Jenny**, **Damian**, **Heather**, **Sean** and **Kate**, also **Stuart**, **Jason** and **Karen**, **Chris** and myself met at the clubrooms.

Jason had written an observation run with questions to be answered and we left around 9.45ish heading through parts of Adelaide towards Nairne, where **Steve** and **Marie**, **Marilyn** and **Charles** were waiting for us at "Millies" – a coffee and cake shop.

While having morning tea, **John** and **Julie** arrived, a little late but they got there. Coffee finished and on the road again, heading towards Woodchester, **Peter** and **Pauline Silver** met us and we followed them back to their property at Langhorn Creek, where **Jeanette** and **Junette** were waiting. Jason and Karen did a great job of cooking the barbie, amongst the gum trees with plenty of bird life, thanks to Peter and Pauline for our cuppa and xmas cake and a great lunchtime venue.

Time to move on and head towards Normanville Caravan Park. Around this bend, that bend and another bend, "oh no" a straight road ahead not for long, "yes" a couple of more bends – but our Vals handle them all well with not too many U-turns. We arrived at there around 4.30ish and checked into our cabins, some checked the beach out, while others sat and relaxed with a coldie discussing the cruise and organising all the drivers to get us to the hotel for tea. The menu was turkey/fish, plum/choc pudding with all the trimmings – an enjoyable meal with good service.

Next morning, all up bright and early with many chefs to cook egg/bacon/tom for brekky. A great effort by everyone, when all cleaned up, it was back to the cabins to wind up, run sheets all checked and



points allocated. Congratulations to Damian, Heather, Sean and Kate who won first prize, thanks to a little "high tech" help (they shared the chocolates around).

A group photo was taken of all including the cars (see next issue). An excellent weekend and once again a big thankyou to Jason and Karen, well done!

That's about all for now, with Xmas just around the corner, Chris and I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all Merry Xmas and Happy New Year for 2013. Hope to see you all at the All Chrysler Day 2013. Travel safe in your Mopars.

– Cheers Di



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THE IMPOSSIBLE DREAM?



Since the mighty Valiant Charger, the only sign of a pentastar at top level circuit competition anywhere downunder in recent years has been the 300C lap car at the Clipsal 500. And the only chance of seeing any Mopar muscle actually racing was in the Touring Car Masters. So while hanging out for this support category, we could only sheepishly mutter under our breaths – in between the red and blue yawn (and quite a few bourbons) – that with the lap car! “at least we always came first...”

Come 2012, with the ‘Cars of the Future’ direction for the V8 Supercar competition, there’s now a glimmer of hope that one of our own might be out there once again. There has been plenty of talk that the SRT program at Mopar may provide us with a V8 300C to barrack for. At long last, it seemed. But then we were later told, much to our disappointment, that in fact 2013 would only see the addition of Mercs and Nissan.

But wait! What’s this, long-suffering Mopar devotees? According to a recent article by motorsport journo **Mark Fogarty** in *Auto Action*, Chrysler isn’t out of the race to join **V8 Supercars** just yet after all, but like any other new manufacturer eyeing an entry, it has obviously left it too late to make me the start of the new Cars of the Future format at next year’s V8 Supercar season opener here in Adelaide. While Chrysler’s motorsport boss in the USA has admitted talks are actually continuing, the consensus was that we would never be involved in professional motorsport here again. But V8 Supercars supremo **Tony Cochrane** hasn’t ruled out a new arrival later in the year, and along with a certain Korean maker widely rumoured to be looking at V8s, Chrysler could still be on the cards despite the announcement by the company’s Aussie subsidiary that it had decided not to enter the sport.

SRT Chief Executive **Ralph Gilles**, who also oversees Chrysler’s racing programs, revealed that he was still curious about the V8 Supercar scenario. And he confirmed that he had been sounded out on supporting a Car of the Future version of the new Chrysler 300 SRT8, possibly run under the guise of the Chrysler Dealer Team. “I’ve been approached by the local dealers here to race the 300 SRTs,” he said. “Right now my priority is the new SRT Viper GTS (which will race in ALMS GT), but we’re wide open to other motorsport; we are trying to expand our brand.” He noted how V8 Supercars had become more and more popular with SPEED TV’s coverage of it in the USA. “I’m very enamoured with it,” he said. “I love watching it! I think it’s a fantastic form of racing”.

At one stage the Fujitsu Racing Team were also linked with the 300C, but the agreement among V8 teams now is that any new manufacturer that hasn’t already signed off on a COTF development program wouldn’t be ready for the start of next season. “They would want to be into it already..” observed Kelly Racing CEO **John Crennan**, who recently chose to run a Nissan. “There’s a hell of a lot to do, I can tell you.” While Cochrane conceded that another make was unlikely to make the first event, he remained hopeful a fourth brand would commit in time to joining while next season was in progress. “I think there possibly will be, but I think they will join during the year.” Cochrane told *Auto Action* “I don’t think they’ll be there for the opening round. I think to be on the grid in Adelaide... they have to test and everything else.” He added that economic troubles overseas had delayed a prospective manufacturer’s decision to enter the V8 championship. “Right now, they’re a bit held up in their whole thing.”

Not long after Fogarty wrote this article however, Dodge in the states made the stunning announcement that – despite a celebratory press campaign revealing plans for a new Dodge Charger racecar earlier this year – it would be now be pulling out of NASCAR for 2013. Only Chevrolet, Toyota and Ford will participate in NASCAR next year, as over recent years brand numbers have actually been diminishing in the US top level saloon racing – almost like swapping position with what is happening in Australia. So what repercussions will this pose for a possible future Mopar interest in the V8s here? Especially given the success of other factory teams such as Bektash and Crick in the other motorsports down under?

Flashback? Renown former GT Viper driver and Launceston Chrysler dealer Greg Crick has recently put Valiant back into the Aussie motorsport spotlight in his Team Mopar Charger. We now have a proven and successful factory team in Classic Touring Cars, so why not in the big league?





Inaugural Group 2 champion
Mick Wilson back in season 2007

TOURING CAR MASTERS

Since its inception in 2007, the Touring Car Masters has rapidly grown to become one of Australia's premier racing categories, and one of the most popular and spectacular V8 Supercar support classes.

The Touring Car Masters series began its inaugural season in 2007. It pioneered a new class of racing by introducing innovative technical regulations aiming to improve safety and reliability and provide an exciting and entertaining race package. When **Biante** took the naming rights, it immediately struck a winning formula, with its mix of classic hero cars and modern improvements, such as disc brakes, dry-sumped engines and radial tyres, producing intense, dynamic racing right from the outset.

Since then, the popular series has continued to go from strength-to-strength, lifting the class to become a successful and highly-competitive category – with a regular meet now at Mallala.

Showcasing a selection of immaculately prepared replica touring cars of the pre-1974 era, the **Biante Touring Car Masters** boasts some of the sport's most iconic muscle cars from our own Charger through to Falcon GTs, BOSS Mustangs, Camaros, Monaros, Toranas and Porsche 911s. Evoking the glory days of Touring Cars, the Masters competition has vast appeal with a fan base that bridges all walks of life and spans generations. Attracting many heroes of the sport including former V8 Supercar drivers into the fold, the series features such greats as seven-time Bathurst winner and four-time Australian Touring Car Champion, **Jim Richards**; two-time Bathurst winner and former Australian Touring Car Champion, **John Bowe**; four-time Australian Truck Racing Champion, **Bob Middleton**, as well as guest drives from well-known racing stars including **Glenn Seton**, **Charlie O'Brien**, **Phil Brock** and **Kim Jane**.

Of course Chrysler's roots in motorsport remain strong, as proved by **Mick Wilson** in the series' inaugural year, when he was crowned one of the series' first champions – of Group 2 – in his authentic R/T Charger.

AND NOW MORE CHRYSLER HISTORY AT SANDOWN

Greg Crick has re-created Chrysler history at Sandown Raceway during round six of the Touring Car Masters, coming home in fourth outright, the best results seen by a Chrysler product since the marque joined Australia's favourite muscle car race series in its inaugural year of 2007.

Crick made his series debut driving the **Makarios** GTO Falcon. Using his wealth of experience to help with development, he then received a commitment of manufacturer support from Chrysler's Mopar performance parts brand, and made the decision to join the series full time in a 1973 Chrysler Charger E55, taking the number 75 to celebrate 75 years of Mopar Performance in Australia.

Taking to the circuit for the first time at the last round, Muscle Car Masters, Crick and his 340 powered machine were a popular addition to pit lane and utilised the Sydney Motorsport Park event to test and develop the vehicle that had made its own debut with the series at this event last season. The Mopar crew made progress during the race weekend, going on to use the time between events for further research and development projects to come out and take the next step at Sandown's round six.

In the opening practice sessions, Crick had his Mopar Charger into the top ten as the R&D continued in the paddock, the team finding a second between

practice one and two and looking strong going into the 20 minute qualifier. With only half the qualifying session under green conditions, Crick used six laps to push the Charger onto the fourth row of the grid, taking seventh in just the second event for the team.

Race one saw Crick in the heart of the action early, going nose to tail with **Collins** and **Bressington** along the run into Dandenong Road, the performance of the #75 evident before losing six positions with a journey through the turn one sandtrap thanks to a balance bar that had jammed on the roll cage and spiking rear brakes. Gathering momentum, Crick fought back five places and was again into the top ten challenge, before the issue struck again, going wide through turn one but holding strong to bring the Charger home in tenth.

The second race of the weekend played host to the top ten reverse grid challenge seeing Crick launch from pole position as the field headed for turn one, the #75 Mopar entry leading the way and going on to put clean air between his control and the strong field.

Keeping control for the opening half of the race before a safety car, bringing dual champion **Bullas** and 17 cars back onto the bumper. Off the restart it was the Charger and Bullas' Mustang side by side out of the kink, Crick conceding second place but staying within a second of the lead as he brought the Mopar Charger home.

Race three, the final 12 laps of the weekend and Crick would start from fifth, looking strong as he took on series regulars **Edwards** and **Kassulke** to be third by the close of the opening lap.

As **Miedecke** and **Bullas** surged through, Crick kept the Mopar Charger strong at the head of the field, holding onto fourth as they crossed the line to complete the team's second round of the series, a round where they would make Chrysler and series history as the highest placed finish for a Chrysler product since entering the popular category six years ago, and no there's no doubt it was a good feeling, Crick explaining, "That's fantastic, we're just thrilled."

"It's very rewarding to start to see the work that Les (Small) has done on the car come to fruition. We've had our dramas with brakes and we're treating these events as test sessions to make progress with the car and compete further development, and we've now got the handling of the car better again, the brakes are better, and we're going in the right direction."

"It's very enjoyable, it's a fantastic category, it's really fun to drive out there, and while the safety car caught us out this weekend, this is racing and it's all round a great effort from our crew along with the outstanding support we're receiving from Chrysler and Mopar Performance."



The shape of things to come?
V8 Supercar artist Dane Childs came up
with this beautiful concept of a 300C V8
Supercar in Chrysler factory livery.

PENTASTARS BACK AT A.I.R., AT LAST

It's known as the city of churches to most forms of media and interstate residents, but the locals are well aware that Adelaide really is the city of Chryslers – and this was proven on 21st of October at Adelaide International Raceway.

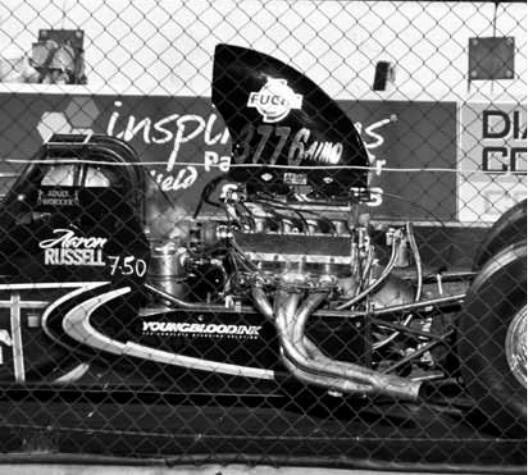
While the religious were attending their local churches, the true believers were worshipping the many Mopars that congregated at the dragstrip to show their stylish bodylines and run some serious times, over the 400 metres of bitumen that was left well prepared from the previous

days Group One racing event – which saw the top fuel dragsters and pro stock drag racing cars battle for ANDRA championship points.

The Saturday's racing also included street cars from any make and some Chryslers chose to compete both days, or some just the Saturday only. **Michael Bridges** ran consistent mid 11 second quarters in his tough 265 4-speed Centura, while **Joe Jerkovic** also knocked off several Fords and Holdens as he advanced through

several rounds of the dial-your-own racing format. **Frank Bergamin** also chose to run both days and get the most out of the track time with his strong 318 turbo set up. The car ran strong 10 second passes all weekend and proved that it is a reliable package not to be underestimated. Pro stock legend and Mopar ambassador **Lee Bektash** was proud as punch to be running the Mopar sponsored Pro stock Dodge Stratus race car at the Adelaide event. Lee runs a 400 cube hemi R4 LA-based small block with 1100 horse power naturally aspirated! The event was dreamed







up by Lee and the leasee of the AIR, **Rino D'Alfonso** – who realised the need for the South Australian Chrysler community to get some exclusive Mopar-only drag racing action and a high performance orientated car show in the one event. Thankyou, Rino.

The Sunday morning started with a show n'shine of Chryslers in the pit area and there was some seriously tough cars to check out. It was also a good opportunity to chat with the builders and owners of these awesome cars in a casual relaxed atmosphere, but by noon we were all starting to getting pretty excited about the afternoon of racing ahead. Not all cars hit the track in the afternoon, some chose to laze about in the brilliant sunshine and blind the punters with the gleaming paint and chrome.

Peter Fletcher brought his awesome '06 300C down from the riverland with its full custom paint and leather interior, running huge 24inch rock star wheels dropped on the grass thanks to air bagged suspension. The car was built by **Queen Street Customs** and attracted plenty of attention on the day. As did **Ralph Biagi's** 1970 bright yellow Challenger which was built by himself back in 2001 and still looks brilliant today. It goes hard too, thanks to a nice 440. Ralph is currently building a '68 Dart with a 700 hp monster Hemi for street and strip duties, so keep your eye out for more info on this baby when its completed. The cobalt blue 74 VJ Charger owned by **George Samaras** is a very strong car, running a 340 R block built by **Parsins and Meyers** in the USA. It packs a strong bottom end with a billet crank and Childs and Albert aluminium rods. The carby is a Garry Williams 850 annular bolted to an

Edelbrock Victor Junior flowing into J heads ported in the USA by **Mullen & Co Race Heads**. The 904 Torqueflight has a 5900 TCI converter. Power is transferred to a 5.11 full spool and Summer Bros. 31 spline billet axels. Believe me, the car sounds tough as hell and would be a handful to drive on the street!

Sunday afternoon was set aside for drag racing and there were some really strong performances from the likes of **Louis Svingos** in his orange, all steel panelled VG 2-door, who ran a 10.16 on the day but has clocked 10.0 at 134mph previously, in the 343 cu small block built by **SRE Dyno**. Its packing 15 to 1 compression with a huge roller cam. Induction is a PRC carb set up, flowing the Q 16 racing fuel down into a Victor 34 manifold. A super strong Jericho 4 speed manual gearbox and Dana 60 rear with 6.17 gears and spool, turn the 40 spline strange axels which are bolted onto those massive 30.5 x 14.5 Goodyear slicks.

Rob Evans brought his jaw dropping yellow hardtop out for some fun and also ran some good times on the track. **Rob Barbiero's** VC Val ran an 11.6 in full street trim, then three of his mates jumped in and they drove this sweet cruiser home. The CL Charger of **Peter Karapetis** has previously run a 10 on NOS, with its 383cu 727 & 4500 stall 10 inch converter pushing power through a 4.11 spool and billet 31 spline axels with a Quickfuel 950 carby, but a split radiator caused some problems on the day. Most of the cars drove to the event and raced in street trim, while others bolted on slicks at the track before running some quick times. **Merv Coyne** runs a 340 small block in his beautiful gold Centura and was pulling consistent low 11s all weekend.

Billy Papas ran 11.4 @115 in his tough VF 2-door small block stroker (featured in Chrysler Action). The crowd in the grandstands also saw plenty of runs from the green VC of **Steve Ricco** which packs a stout 340 small block, and is a consistent low 11 second car. Other well known local streeters include **Richard Piotrowicz** in his big bad Dodge, who was pulling low 12 sec quarters from the heavy steel-bodied small block-powered luxury Phoenix. The Dart of **Chris Baxter** is also a well known Saturday night cruiser on the Adelaide scene. This car has been around for many years and on the Sunday managed high 11s on the track.

Jason Armstrong came out to have a bit of fun in his red VH Charger that he uses to tow his other track race car around with. The 265 has a home built fuel injection set up with a Motec computer and forged pistons bolted up to a turbo 700 trans and 1800 converter, 9 inch diff and 3.25 LSD. The package is his daily driver and puts out around 310 kw at the wheels.

The weather was perfect and all the cars got as much track time as they could have wished for. Nobody wanted to go home but all good things must come to an end, so we all had to pack up and go home and wait patiently until next year's Mopar Mania comes around again. Another chance to race Chrysler against Chrysler. In the meantime the South Australian Mopar-mad can retreat back to their sheds and plan for the next year's event – and maybe bolt on some more Mopar power parts to lower those track times for next year...

– Raddy

mopar under the southern cross

AUSSIE PENTASTAR HERO

LEE BEKTASH

Our great white hope **Lee Bektash** (born 1969) hails from Keilor in Victoria. **Team Mopar Australia** competes in the ANDRA Pro-Stock drag racing series, as principal partners of Lee and his team. Team Mopar Australia's sponsors include **Chrysler Australia** of course, **Revolution Racegear**, **VP Racing Fuel**, **PRE Race Engines**, **Global Workforce PROFab**, **Western Fresh Wholesale**, **Jerry Bickel Race Components** and **Protrans**.

Lee's Dodge Stratus Pro Stocker is currently the quickest car in Australian Pro Stock History with a record pass of 7.023. And yes, "of course it's a Hemi."

After a record breaking performance at the 2011 **Castrol EDGE Winternationals** at Willowbank Raceway – where Team Mopar clocked a 7.03 second pass to become the fastest Pro Stock vehicle in Australia at this event – Mopar Australia announced in June 2011 that it would be continuing its sponsorship of Team Mopar ANDRA for two more seasons. With this renewal of Mopar's ongoing sponsorship of Lee and his team since 2008, the current season is shaping up to be a massive one for Team Mopar's Pro Stock Dodge.

Last season, the Mopar Team achieved their quickest time ever with the record of 7.02 seconds. And with this latest 7.03 second pass, they have

backed up their performance to officially become the fastest team in the Pro Stock class. This triumph followed on from a runner-up position at the recent **Nitro Champs** at Sydney Dragway on 29th April, where they set the quickest MPH of a blistering 194.69 (313.32kmh).

Team Mopar will have the edge next season with the introduction of a brand new engine, developed with internationally renowned engine builders **Rick Watters** (from RWR in Arizona) and **Tomi Laine** (from Indianapolis), assisting with the set up of the racecar. The engine will feature new Hemi P5 Billet Heads and will produce 20-25 more horsepower. A big boost sure to set Team Mopar up for more records.

Lee said; "Mopar Australia's support since 2008 has been unbelievable and to have it extended for another two seasons is brilliant. With a brand new Team Mopar engine, I know we'll break the six second pass".

Rob Moorcroft, General Manager – After Sales, Chrysler Australia said, "The recent Willowbank performance shows exactly why we support the team. The hard work and professionalism represents everything Mopar Australia stands for. We look forward to what the future holds and we are sure it will be rewarding".



year of the hemi

ALLEN JOHNSON AND JACK BECKMAN

MOPAR'S TWO NHRA 'WORLD CHAMPIONS'



In November, Johnson in his Dodge Avenger driver and his **J&J Racing** team were finally crowned "World Champions" after 17 years – with the **NHRA Full Throttle Drag Racing Series Pro Stock** title. By qualifying No. 2 for the final meet at Pomona, Johnson automatically clinched the title. This is the first national title for Johnson and his father and engine builder, **Roy**, who have raced together in Pro Stock since 1996. Johnson posted his first top 10 showing in 1999, and had finished in the top 10 in eight of the previous 10 campaigns; his best outings were No. 4 efforts in 2007 and 2011. Johnson, who entered the 2012 season with 18 No. 1 qualifying efforts, has always enjoyed ample power from his father's engines, but the team had lacked the consistency to win on race day until this year.

After clinching the championship on Saturday, Johnson drove his Avenger to one last sweet win over teammate and good friend **Vincent Nobile**, earning a career-best seven wins in one season and his first at Pomona.

"Our team is so awesome and the Mopar Dodge Avenger has just performed flawlessly," said Johnson after punctuating his first championship with the win. When asked what kept him going for 17 years he added, "Determination and my father (who has always been his engine builder). He wanted to do this all his life and my whole focus was

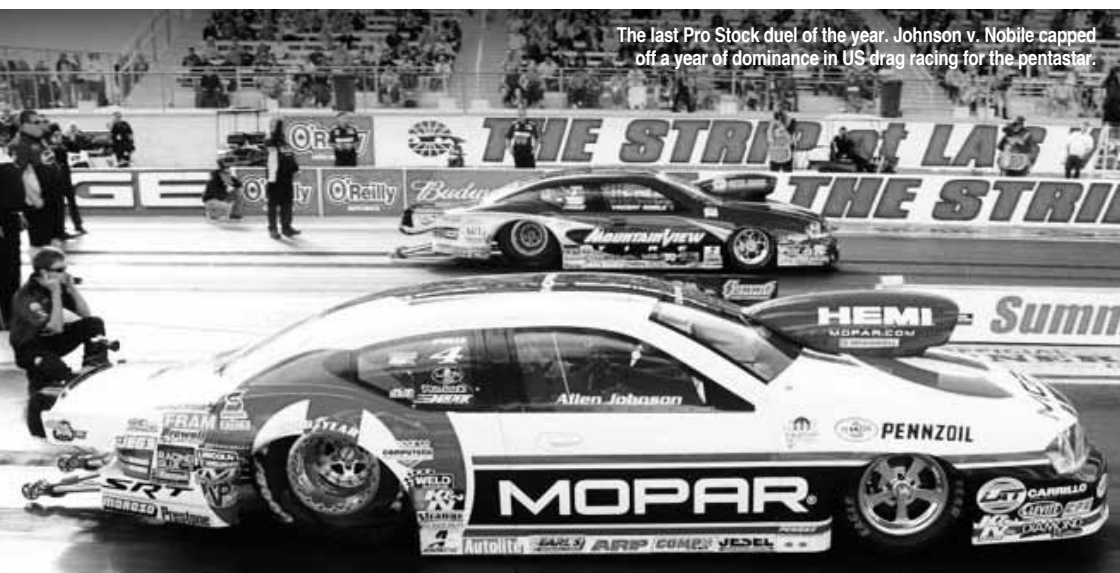
Over in the US the 2012 NHRA season has just finished, and been dubbed the "Year of the HEMI". **Pro Stock** World Champion **Allen Johnson** wrapped up his winning season by taking victory in an all-Mopar final round battle, while **Jack Beckman** added another championship trophy to Mopar's mantle by earning the **Funny Car** crown for **Don Schumacher Racing**, during the final meet for the season at the **Automobile Club of Southern California NHRA Finals** in Pomona.

The two championships highlight our brand's 75th anniversary year in which both Mopar-powered drivers captured 10 wins in each of the Pro Stock and Funny Car classes.

"All of us are very proud of Allen Johnson and Jack Beckman on bringing home two NHRA World Championships for Mopar," said **Pietro Gorlier**, President and CEO of Mopar, Chrysler Group LLC's service, parts and customer-care brand. "Allen's impressive win at Pomona solidified his mark on his Championship and all the hard work behind it. It was also amazing to watch Jack and **Ron Capps** battle each other in their Dodge Charger R/Ts for the crown."

"Mopar-powered cars have either led or been near the front of the field all year in both Pro Stock and Funny Car, which shows the strength of our Mopar HEMI engines that compete in the NHRA," added Gorlier. "It was tremendous to watch our Team Mopar drivers battle for wins all season long and be rewarded with two championships."

Cinderella story. Beckman came back from the brink of despair to clinch the Funny Car championship.



The last Pro Stock duel of the year. Johnson v. Nobile capped off a year of dominance in US drag racing for the pentastar.

winning this with him. A lot of hard work and determination went into winning this. We had a dominating performance in this Countdown, won a championship and ended with a win. What more can we do? That has added just a little more emotion to it."

Johnson, starting from the No. 2 spot, first dispatched of **Greg Stanfield** in the opening round with a run of 6.513-seconds at 212.76 mph to Stanfield's 6.564/210.77. In the quarterfinals Johnson (6.520/212.63) took out veteran **Ron Krisher** (6.537/211.79), earning lane choice for his semifinals battle with **Mike Edwards**. Johnson was quickest of the round with a 6.526/211.16 to best Edwards, who slowed after launch, and advanced to his 11th final of the year, and his third against teammate Vincent Nobile, who competes with Mopar HEMI engines built by Johnson's J&J Racing team.

Nobile was stellar off the starting line at Pomona, recording a perfect .000 reaction time in his first-round defeat of Mopar/JEGS.com Dodge Avenger driver **Jeg Coughlin Jr.** (Coughlin finished ninth in the final NHRA Pro Stock standings). Nobile nearly matched that in the quarterfinals with a .002 reaction time, scoring a stunning hole shot victory over **Jason Line**, who posted the quickest run of the round with a 6.495/213.13 but still fell to Nobile's 6.546/211.79. Nobile was quickest again against **Erica Enders** in the semis, scoring yet another holeshot win thanks to a .015 reaction time and 6.543/211.49 run to Enders' .023 mark and 6.542/211.86 pass.

With sunset upon Auto Club Raceway, Johnson and Nobile lined up for the final race of the 2012 Pro Stock season. The veteran was quicker off the tree (.024 to Nobile's .026) and also had the better run, a 6.528/212.76 to his opponent's 6.533/211.66. The victory was the tenth of the season out of 23 events for a Mopar-powered NHRA Pro Stock racer.

During his first qualifying attempt on the Thursday, Funny Car leader Jack Beckman's championship hopes looked shaky when he blew the engine on his Dodge Avenger, sending the car's fiberglass bodywork flying in a fiery explosion. But only a day later, he was able to achieve the fastest run in the prelim round after his crew had performed a miracle rebuild overnight. "Those guys were able to take a car that was in really bad shape last night and bring back a great race car," Beckman said. "Now we can play around tomorrow and go for the throat on Sunday." Beckman topped qualifying with a 4.025-second run at 319.75 mph on the Friday. He earned three points to extend his lead over fellow Moparnaut Ron Capps in second-place to seven points. Capps failed to qualify in the first two rounds, with two more rounds set for the following Saturday.

And go for the throat Beckman did, in the end trumping the entire field to claim the title. What a sensational comeback!

GODFATHER OF MOPAR DRAG RACING



Although he is most famous for adapting the common Hemi motor for drag racing, catapulting it into automotive history, many forms of motorsport have benefited from the engineering, machining skills, and passion of **Ed Donovan**. The godfather of the racing Chrysler, perhaps just as famous as many of his drivers.

Born in Los Angeles in 1928, Donovan was interested in engines from childhood. When drag racing became a legitimate activity in 1950, it didn't take him long to become involved. Always a fan of four cylinder engines, he

and a mate raced a roadster powered by a hopped up Model B Ford. After a tour of duty in the Army, Donovan's interest in engines took him to the wilds of Alaska where he maintained steam engines for the US government. When he returned to LA, he became a machinist at **Meyer and Drake Racing Engines**, where the mighty Offenhausers were produced. His love of four-bangers and his admiration for his mentors **Ed Winfield** and design genius **Leo Goossen** were certainly reinforced by the time he spent there.

Donovan's love of drag racing led to a new career, which started in the evenings at his home where he began manufacturing stainless steel valves that were far better able to withstand the rigours of nitro-methane fuel. Eventually, the success of his products led him to leave Meyer and Drake. In 1962, he and partner **Frank Startup** opened the now famous **Donovan Engineering** in Inglewood, California.

Always one to identify a need and create a product to fill it, Donovan's product line quickly expanded to include the first two disc "slipper clutch," forged rocker arms and aluminium valve covers for 392 Chryslers, and driveline components such as spider shafts, axles, driveshaft couplers and one-piece bell housings or "clutch cans."

Donovan did his own research and development on a series of dragsters he raced with various partners. His drivers included such stars as **Bobby Tapia**, **Wayne King** and fellow Hall of Famer **Tom McEwen**. It was Donovan, who after a particularly rewarding match race victory over **Don "The Snake" Prudhomme**, recalled Kipling's **Jungle Book** and gave McEwen the "Mongoose" nickname that would become his trademark throughout his career.

When more-efficient superchargers and fuel systems began to take their toll with regularity on the junkyard Hemi Chryslers, it was Donovan who came up with an answer. In 1971 he developed the legendary Donovan 417, an aluminium block based on the 392 Chrysler, but with features designed to withstand the rigours of fuel racing. In its debut, the first 417 powered **John Wiebe's** (by then) obsolete front engine dragster to an Ontario strip record, and runner-up honours at the '71 NHRA Supernationals.

After years of acclaim developing his beloved Mopar donks, in 1978 Ed developed an aluminium 350 small-block Chevrolet that has since become a staple of sprint car racing. In 1985 an aluminium big-block Chevy followed, which is used extensively in boat racing and sportsman drag racing categories.

Since his untimely death in 1989, Ed's widow **Kathy** has continued to successfully operate Donovan Engineering.



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mopar drag racing history

CHRYSLER LEGENDS

THE SNAKE AND THE MONGOOSE

During the seventies there was a notorious "double-act" in American drag racing, who were as famous as rock stars for being legendary as arch enemies.

Tom "The Mongoose" McEwen (born 1937) is a famous American drag racer who actually only won the US Nationals once during his 45 year career. But he is listed as number 16 of the 50 most significant drivers of NHRA's first 50 years. Ed Donovan nicknamed him "the Mongoose" in 1964 as a device to entice **Don "the Snake" Prudhomme** (born April 6, 1941) into a high-exposure match race. While McEwen won only five NHRA national events during his 45-plus-year career, his gift for gab and promotional ability made him one of the sport's most influential and controversial figures.

In 1962, Prudhomme became a partner in the **Greer-Black-Prudhomme** digger, which earned the best

win record in NHRA history, before he switched to Funny Car. He would win the NHRA FC championship four times in his thirty-five-year career and be the first Funny Car driver to exceed 250 mph (400 km/h). He retired in 1994 to manage his own racing team. With driver **Larry Dixon**, Prudhomme's team won the US's Top Fuel championship in 2002 and 2003.

Prudhomme was known for his yellow 1970 Plymouth Barracuda called "the Snake" in which he raced fellow Californian McEwen in his red 1970 Plymouth Duster, named "the Mongoose". As a novelty pair, both drivers gained wider public attention from Mattel's "Hot Wheels" toy versions of their cars, released in 1970. Hot Wheels celebrated their 35th anniversary in 2005 with a two day event.

Not only did the two men make drag racing history as champion drivers and later successful owners of their

own drag racing teams, but they also modernised the sport in 1970 by shrewdly enticing toy giant to make its then-new Hot Wheels line the sport's first corporate sponsor. When Mattel put logos on dragsters to make them 200-mph billboards for its toy line and put real-life drivers into its TV commercials, Mattel became the first non-automotive sponsor in a racing sport, and the industry's first commercial tie-in was born. The Mattel sponsorship money and revenue from other sponsors that immediately followed enabled Prudhomme and McEwen to produce remarkable innovations in their dragsters and to make racing a major sport globally.

In 2013, the untold story of how these two actual best mates off the track got into character on the track, and combined with corporate giants to change the face of sports – ultimately becoming the most famous rivalry in racing history – will be made into a movie.



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HEMI UNDER GLASS

Hurst Hemi Under Glass is the name given to a series of exhibition drag racing cars campaigned by **Hurst Performance** between 1965 and 1975. Each wheelstander was based on the current Plymouth Barracuda for the corresponding model year. The car was so named because the fuel injected Chrysler Hemi engine was placed under the Barracuda's exceptionally large rear window. The result of the rearward weight transfer was a "wheelie" down the length of the drag strip.

The Hemi Under Glass was developed by Hurst Corporation with assistance from wheelstanding exhibition racer **Wild Bill Shrewsberry** and was driven by **Bob Riggie**.

The wheelstanding displays became a massive drawcard to drag racing during the seventies and as fan favourites were also immortalised in toy and model forms. Popular model kits of the car were produced in 1/32 scale by Aurora Plastics Corporation and in 1/25 scale by Model Products Corporation. A limited edition 1/18 scale diecast model of the 1966 car is currently available from Highway 61.

Riggie returned to exhibition racing in 1992 with a replica of the 1968 car. The original 1965 car is still owned by Bill Shrewsberry and is in storage in Southern California.

LITTLE RED WAGON



The **Dodge Little Red Wagon** is an exhibition drag racing truck, first introduced in 1965 which was the world's fastest truck at the time and the first truck to actually wheelstand.

Owned and driven by **Bill "Maverick" Golden** and based on the compact Dodge A100 pickup, the truck toured extensively throughout the United States and was frequently seen in television commercials for Dodge trucks.

Builders **Jim Schaeffer** and **John Collier** performed extensive modifications to the A100 in order to fit a supercharged 426 Hemi engine and TorqueFlite automatic transmission.

Since the A100 was a cabover design, Schaeffer and Collier opted to install the drivetrain in a roughly amidships configuration between the rear of the cab and the front of the pickup bed within a welded steel subframe.

Parts deemed unnecessary were removed from the body, among them the heater, dashboard, front bumper and all body sealer. The passenger doors were replaced with fibreglass units. The Little Red Wagon's first dragstrip run netted a mid-11 second quarter mile at 120 mph (193 km/h).

The vehicle was not originally intended to perform wheelstands; the slight rearward bias caused the nose to lift in the air for nearly the entire quarter-mile run.

Golden soon purchased the truck from Dodge for use as an exhibition racer. The Little Red Wagon debuted in the 1965 season opener at **Lions Drag Strip** in Long Beach, California in front of 10,000 fans and reporters from major newspapers and automotive publications.

The vehicle suffered three wrecks in 1969, 1971 and again in 1975. After the 1975 wreck, Golden converted a non-operable show truck and campaigned it for the next thirty years. Golden entered the Guinness Book of World Records in 1977 with a 4230' (1289m) wheelstand, approximately the length of three quarter-mile dragstrips.

In 2009, the Little Red Wagon was sold at RM Auctions **Icons of Speed and Style Auction**. The vehicle was expected to fetch US\$300,000; it was instead the auction's top seller at \$550,000.



HELLRAISING VAL

The "Demon's Disciple" was the first funny car of any make in Australia.

Based on a VE, the car featured an all-steel flip-top body, with a nitro burning 392 Chrysler from Top Fuel racer **Graham Withers' Ampol GT dragster**. He not only raced the car but also built the chassis. The car's highly anticipated debut first took place in late 1968 at Castlereagh. The crew was still welding pieces on the car in the staging lanes! The car's fearless driver was legendary **Ray Zygodlo**.

The team raced the car over the next five years. The car's best times were in the nine-second range.

Only a Valiant. And only in Australia. Crazy!



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A LONG WAY FROM MOONSHINE

Chrysler, Dodge and Plymouth have a long and illustrious history in NASCAR, particularly during the company's muscle-car glory years. Dodge has been, in many ways, a victim of its own success in America's most popular racing series. It might even be fair to say that Chrysler's aggressively competitive performance division and its engines have made NASCAR what it is today.

THE EARLY YEARS

Of course we all know how NASCAR first began as a competition between moonshine runners. And early Dodge and Plymouth racers, just like those from other marques, used whatever was available at the time.

You might say that Chrysler Corporation's initial entry into NASCAR was all uphill. Right from the start. **Johnny Mantz** won the first **Southern 500** at Darlington, South Carolina in a 6-cylinder Plymouth business coupe. It was maybe the slowest car in the 75-car field, yet it won by two full laps. Mantz outfoxed the entire field by driving low and slow. While all the other drivers went pedal-to-the-metal, blowing tyres to smithereens, Mantz was on a Sunday drive to racing history.

Chrysler's world-beating FirePower Hemi debuted in 1951, but it was far too expensive for the backwoods boys at the time. It wasn't until 1954 that **Lee Petty** brought Chrysler a championship with his Hemi-powered New Yorker. **Tim Flock** and **Buck Baker** conquered the next two years with their Hemi-powered C-300s. Chrysler pulled its factory backing until 1961, but returned in a big way afterward.

Later on of course, prodigal son **Richard Petty** developed his up-near-the-wall driving style out of despair because his Plymouth lacked power. He found he could muster a few hundred more RPMs by staying up high and slamming down off the banks of the turns.

THE WEDGE

It was 1955 before **MoPar** (nicknamed for Chrysler's Motor Parts Division) began to win races with horsepower instead of horse sense. Prior to 1955, when Mopars won it was because the drivers outsmarted and outdrove everyone else, never outpowered them. But when **Karl Kiekhaefer** came on the scene with his mighty Chrysler 300s, the whole picture changed.

In the 1955 season Tim Flock won 18 of the 38 races he entered, leading every single lap in 11 of them. Kiekhaefer's cars won a total of 22 races. In the first 25 races that season, his cars won 21 of them, 16 in a row at one point. Kiekhaefer was a perfectionist, demanding absolute superiority from everybody who worked for him. Often he would rent an entire motel, 40 or 50 rooms, leaving most of them vacant because he wanted his drivers to be left alone. Really alone. The husbands stayed in one wing and the wives in the other. There was a curfew and bed checks. "It was like the army," said Buck. "Or prison," said Flock.

When Flock was hired as the driver of a third car, it became a true "dream team." But the dream didn't last long. Tim quit. The strict regime and stern demands were giving him an ulcer. "Karl did everything but make us stand in the corner," he said. "Racing just wasn't fun anymore."

Speedy Thompson was hired to replace Tim. And then **Herb Thomas** was added. Another dream team. It was an almost unbeatable combination and the 300s went right on winning. Thirty times in 1956. Baker, Thomas and Thompson made it look easy. Thomas won two "impossible" races in a row, starting 46th once and 47th the other time.

As if he had proven his point, Kiekhaefer was gone just as abruptly as he had arrived. In two seasons, his cars had totally dominated NASCAR racing. And it had

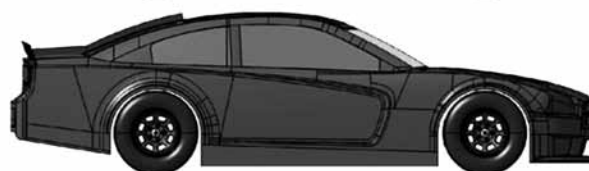
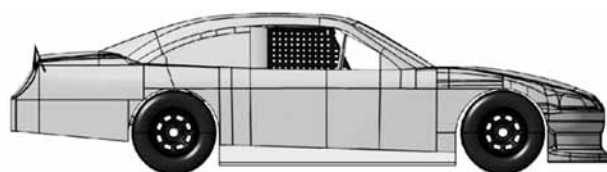
established Chrysler as an almost instant powerhouse in stock car racing – and this was in days when "stock" meant just that. Lee Petty's Plymouth was pretty much left to take up the slack, and he did – winning eleven times and taking the championship in 1957. When Lee was seriously injured in a qualifying crash at Daytona, it was left to son Richard to take over the reins as the Mopar standard bearer. One thing was apparent: It was going to take some help from Chrysler. He got it. Big time.

The late 1950s and early 1960s were a transitional time for Chrysler and NASCAR. The old Hemi engine was on its way out, and the new B-series and RB-series "wedge" engines were on their way in. The wealthier teams had already found the cash for Chrysler's newest B-series limited engine, which saw use in 361, 383 and 400 cubic inch forms. The RB-series came along in 1959. Those engines quickly fell into the shadow of Chrysler's Max Wedge 426, a large-bore engine that served as the company's primary performance engine until 1964 and again after the Hemi ban of 1965.

THE HEMI

What can you say about Chrysler's legendary 426 Race Hemi that hasn't already been said? With its cross-bolted main caps, hemispherical combustion chamber and heavy-duty construction, this engine set more records and won more races than any other single engine in NASCAR history. Race-bred and born for the track, the new Race Hemi propelled Richard Petty to a series of crushing victories during the 1964 season. So crushing, in fact, that NASCAR banned the Hemi until 1966. Ford chucked a hissy fit and left NASCAR until it returned, ironically, with its own hemi-head 427 two years later. If you can't beat em...

Ford had dominated NASCAR from 1961 to 1963 with their racing program tagged "Total Performance." And



The family tree. Mopar NASCARs, right up to an engineer's rendering comparing the differences in the latest (now ill-fated) Dodge Charger NASCAR (right). The top diagram is the current model, while the bottom is the recently proposed 2013 model, showing a shorter tail and greater front windshield deflection, plus wheel flaring and side-panel scalloping. However, it now appears as though neither will even make the starting grid next year.



SRT Charger in action, 2012

total it was, with drivers such as **Fireball Roberts**, **Marvin Panch**, **Fred Lorenzen** and **Ned Jarrett**. The Holman-Moody and Wood Brothers' cars were in charge.

But in 1964, Chrysler introduced to racing what was to become the textbook engine – the Hemi. Their first step was to streamline the Plymouth and Dodge bodies. And then they dug around and came up with some blueprints, and set out to build the engine that would make their cars run like the wind.

It was to be called the *Super-Commando* in Plymouths and the *Hemi-Charger* in Dodges. They reached into their bag of tricks and added another innovation from their racing past, a double-rocker arm system. The huge valves were placed on opposite sides of the combustion chamber, rather than side-by-side, giving the engine a free-breathing chamber which produced incredible power at the top end – about 500 or so brute horsepower.

Chrysler took cars with the 426 Hemi engine to Goodyear's five-mile circular test track in San Angelo, Texas, and turned unbelievable speeds for the time – of 180 mph (290kmh). Ford won the season opener on the Riverside, California, road course, taking the first five places. The Hemis were still in wraps. When the Mopar teams unloaded their cars at Daytona there was one noticeable change – painted on the hoods were the words "Hemi-Powered." The Ford, Chevy and Pontiac teams weren't sure what it really meant, but they soon found out.

Petty qualified at 174.418, which was 20 mph faster than his speed one year before. And then **Paul Goldsmith** in the Ray Nichols-prepared Hemi went even faster. He captured the pole with a speed of 174.910. The Fords qualified in the high 160s, which, suddenly, was

lumbering. Petty, **Jimmy Pardue** and Goldsmith crossed the finish line 1-2-3 in the Daytona 500, while Plymouth PR man **Dick Williford** went through the pits passing out badges which read "Total What?"

Petty ended up winning the championship in 1964 by an immense margin. But the high speeds that season would cost Chrysler their treasured engine. In an effort to slow things down, NASCAR banned the Hemi. For safety, they said. With the suddenness of a bolt of lightning, Chrysler was out of NASCAR.

So, too, was Richard Petty, who went drag racing with a Hemi-powered Plymouth Barracuda named "Outlawed." At mid season, with crowds down at NASCAR races because of a Chrysler boycott, NASCAR-founder **Bill France** made an unprecedented move – he reinstated the Hemi engine for tracks of one mile or less and for road courses. The Mopar teams and the crowds came back.

In 1967, Richard Petty became "the king." He won 27 races – including ten in a row – in his trademark blue number 43 Plymouth Belvedere, a record that surely will never be broken. The new monarch, though, came close in 1968, winning 21 times and finishing in the top five in 38 of the 46 races. The following year, **Buddy Baker** became the first driver to exceed 200 mph (320 kmh) on a closed circuit. He did it in a Dodge Daytona.

BEGINNING OF THE END

Thanks to years of Superbirds and Daytonas and Chargers, Mopar continued to excel in NASCAR, but all of the squabbling with the ruling body took its toll. The Hemi dominated NASCAR until 1971, when event organisers made a series of regulations changes that forced it into extinction.

Chrysler put less and less into the racing program and by 1978 Ford and Chevrolet were allowed to race smaller Thunderbirds, Cougars and Monte Carlos,

Chrysler was left at the starting line with only the bulky Dodge Magnum, which their two top drivers, Petty and **Neil Bonnett**, simply could not make competitive.

"The Magnum is undriveable at 190 mph," said Petty. By mid-season he still was struggling with the Dodge. He had finished in the top five only six times in the first 18 races. Petty switched to Chevrolet for the Michigan race in 1978. It was the death knell for Chrysler Corporation in racing.

The anguish of the early days, the glory in the middle years, and the frustration in the later times were put to rest. Loyal Mopar fans would never again see the likes of the 300s, Superbirds, Daytonas, Belvederes and Chargers.

NASCAR has never been quite the same without them. But wait! Listen carefully now. Is that a Mopar engine we hear coming out of the smoke in Turn Four?

Engines larger than 358 cubic inches had to use restrictor plates, and by 1974 the LA-series small block had completely replaced the big blocks of yesteryear. The LA block never actually went out of use, it just evolved into the bespoke full-race engine in use today.

From 2011, Chrysler no longer utilised either the New Hemi of Magnum-series engine in NASCAR. While the newest generation of Dodge race engines can trace their ancestry back to the LA, they don't share a single part in common with Chrysler's now out-of-production V8.

SRT Challenger in action, 2010



BUT NOW, DODGE ARE TO LEAVE NASCAR

The global recession is biting hard and there's soon to be one less bit of Americana in auto racing. In what could be the first symptom of the stock car league's recently declining revenue, Chrysler will not be participating in the next season of NASCAR racing.

Dodge announced in August that it would be exiting the league — in which its vehicles have taken 55 Sprint Cup victories since 2001 — after the conclusion of this 2012 season. Dodge has only worked with one NASCAR team since 2009, but when **Penske Racing** announced that they would be partnering with Ford for 2013, the Chrysler-owned brand was left scrambling for a new stock car showcase, Dodge racing boss **Ralph Gilles** told the Detroit Free Press.

"We had a very, I would say, elegant situation with the Penske group, having a one-stop shop, an engine, everything — a very high-quality team to work with," Gilles told the Free Press. "When that changed, the equation changed dramatically ... it's not as easy as

you would think to configure a team at the level that we are accustomed to racing and at the level that we want to perform."

With the exit of Dodge, Chrysler's lone brand with a NASCAR presence, Ford, Toyota and Chevrolet are left to dominate the circuit. This relatively small field of corporate sponsors may underscore larger problems for NASCAR — which saw a 38 percent decrease in ticket sales revenue over the past five years, according to securities filings for NASCAR's track owners. The V8s here in Oz may be diversifying to survive, but over in the states it appears as if the opposite is happening.

"This is pretty huge," former crew chief and current television analyst **Larry McReynolds** told the Associated Press. "This isn't years ago when NASCAR had several different manufacturers and if one had pulled out, it wouldn't have been so noticeable. But in 2012, we only have four, and with one less this news doesn't make the right statement about the sport. Anytime a major sponsor

of any kind, whether a manufacturer, primary team sponsor or series sponsor packs up and goes home, it doesn't look good for NASCAR."

Dodge suffered a huge blow to its ego when Penske pulled its partnership just after Dodge unveiled its new 2013 Charger race car after reportedly working for more than two years on its design. The pain extends beyond Auburn Hills, though. "It comes at a very bad time, and it's a kick in the gut to loyal Dodge fans," motorsports journalist Dave Despain explained. Those loyal Dodge fans may soon find themselves shopping for Fords, because, as the Free Press writes, "NASCAR fans are notoriously loyal to the brands of their favourite drivers."

"We didn't want this day to come," Gilles told the Free Press of the shock announcement. "So, again, it's with a heavy heart [we announce this.] I want to take all of our Dodge fans and give them a big hug, and we can have a beer together, because we are not excited about this, but it's a reality of where we're at right now."



A premature celebration? Chrysler's Street and Racing Technology (SRT) Motorsports team unveiled its new Dodge Charger for 2013 NASCAR Sprint Cup Series competition in March earlier this year at Las Vegas Motor Speedway. Back in October 2009, Dodge had begun to enjoy a renaissance when it introduced the Challenger R/T as the "new car" for the 2010 NASCAR Nationwide Series season. "The reception for the Dodge Challenger was simply outstanding," said Gilles. Buoyed by this success, Mopar then invested in the new Charger. "It's been another remarkable effort by our SRT Motorsports design and engineering teams and Penske Racing, working together with NASCAR, to achieve a Dodge Charger that embodies so many of the characteristics of the production version. Our team is confident, that even with the iconic design features incorporated into the Sprint Cup car, there has been no compromise in the area of competition." D'oh! Well, it's a damn shame Penske decided to go with Ford instead.



OUT TO PASTURE

Where old classic stock cars go to spend their last days? Bonneville Speedway is an area of the Bonneville Salt Flats in Utah, that is marked out for motor sports. It is particularly noted as the venue for numerous land speed records.

Lee Sicilio and his Hemi Charger Daytona has set five 200-plus-mph Bonneville records in 10 consecutive laps. But is the current generation of R/T muscle bred and nurtured in NASCAR, now bound for history, to be relegated to the more obscure motorsports — such as salt flat racing — like many of these famous Superbird and Daytona survivors?

Only time will tell. Meanwhile let's just hope that down under we'll soon see Mopar in the V8 Supercars.



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PENTASTAR THOROUGHBREDS DOWN UNDER

Although the Charger is arguably the best remembered Valiant in Australian motorsport, quite surprisingly earlier models achieved a number of class wins at the annual Bathurst production car race – something that the Charger never did.

An AP5 Valiant first won Class D at the **1963 Armstrong 500**, a VC Valiant V8 won Class D at the **1966 Gallaher 500** and after they were introduced in 1969, a VG Valiant Pacer won Class D at the **1970 Hardie-Ferodo 500**.

The Valiant Charger was raced in Australia in an official capacity during 1971 and 1972, with most effort concentrated upon the annual Bathurst 500 mile touring car event. Chrysler Australia's policy was to race an "Australian made" product, which meant the race cars ran 4.3 Litre (265 cu in) six-cylinder engines equipped with triple Weber carburettors and 3-speed gearboxes. But even skilled driving and good engineering could not defeat Ford's legendary Falcon GTHO Phase III with its 351 cu in (5.75 L) V8.

So CAL employed the services of racing driver **Leo Geoghegan** to assist in the development of the Charger as a touring car racer. The Charger won the first race it entered, the **Toby Lee 100** at Oran Park, driven by **Doug Chivas**. In the 1972 **Hardie-Ferodo 500** at Bathurst, an R/T E49 driven by Chivas finished the race third outright. However, ironically, this '72 VH to do so well at Bathurst was a privateer car, with hardly any product sponsorship from CAL – yet the previous year the Charger had full factory support!



Tony Allen & Tony Reynolds won in their Valiant AP5 at the Armstrong 500 in Bathurst 1963



The V8 was introduced for the AP6 model previous to the VC, but for these two models the V8 was an exclusive model, available only as an automatic, before becoming available as a general option in the VE series. Two Valiant V8s were entered for the 1966 Bathurst race. They placed 9th and 10th outright, which doesn't seem all that great until you realise that the first 8 places were filled by the all conquering Mini Cooper S.



1968

When Chrysler Australia finally decided to come out with a sports concept, the Pacer set the scene for the profile the Charger would ultimately inherit. Based very closely on the US Dodge Dart, the Pacer was the right car at the right time, menacing, powerful and most importantly, a great drive. Identified by a black and red grille treatment, red paint-filled boot lid moulding, sports style (albeit fake) mag wheel covers, narrow waist high body striping and Pacer 225 insignia, the first Pacer was powered by a high-compression version of the 3.69 litre "Slant Six" engine (the compression being raised from 8.4:1 to 9.2:1).



1969



1970



POPE LEO THE FIRST

Leo Geoghegan was the principal driver for Chrysler Australia during the period (1970–1972) when the company supported Valiant Pacer and Valiant Charger Series Production touring car teams. A full bio is in Issue 12 of the new Torqueback.

Geoghegan is the elder of two sons of New South Wales car dealer **Tom Geoghegan**, who went on to become two of the dominant names in Australian motor racing in the 1960s. While his brother **Ian Geoghegan** had much of his success in touring car racing driving Mustangs and GTHOs, Leo spent much of his racing career in open wheel racing cars and sports racing cars. In addition to being a multi-Australian championship winning driver, Geoghegan has the rare distinction for an Australian of having won an international grand prix, specifically the 1969 Grand Prix of Japan.

With the furore that erupted politically in 1972 regarding 'supercars for the streets', Australian touring car regulations changed in 1973 such that manufacturers no longer had to produce strict street versions of their racing cars. These rule changes led to principally Chrysler and then Ford abandoning official racing touring car programs in Australia.

In New Zealand, where the touring car rules were less open, the Charger proved to be virtually unbeatable from 1971 through to 1979, at the famous **B&H 500 mile** (later 1000 km) series held at Pukekohe Park Raceway. The most successful of New Zealand drivers during this time were **Leo Leonard** and **Jim Little**.



While Reg Singh's 1971 R/T Charger may only be a replica of the one Leo Geoghegan drove in the great race, the fact that it has been built with the help of Leo himself means you could call this Charger even better than the original. See, Reg's car is a replica of one that no longer exists, thanks to Chrysler's policy of destroying race cars once they had completed their life span. This policy, which probably made sense to Chrysler at the time, left a generation with a huge void. They were unable to see their hero car anywhere anymore, a real loss for fans of that golden era.

Starting out with a genuine Hemi Orange VH Charger 770, Reg got to work recreating the beautiful race car. Leo Geoghegan lent a hand with a vast amount of input about the car's build. But he didn't just stop with giving Reg tips, he also designed the roll cage and a fair amount of the front end geometry. When you have the man who originally raced the car helping you recreate its tribute, how can you go wrong? As a result this car is strikingly similar to the one fielded by the Geoghegan's Sporty Cars team at Bathurst.

A lot of work has gone into the cars authenticity, such as removing the fuel filler from the rear and installing twin side fillers (one is a dummy). The rear quarter badges were moved forward about eight inches just as an R/T Charger has, and an R/T dash has even been fitted. Under the bonnet sits a beautiful 265ci Hemi straight six with triple 45mm Webers, similar to the engine that powered Leo around the mountain on that glorious day in 1971.



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brocade interior a/c power steer electric
windows (all working) drives well springtime
gold colour. \$8000 firm
Andrew 0439 858 949

1980 Sigma SE. Leather trim, 153000Km,
\$3600
0412 108 990

CARS WANTED

VH 2 Door Pacer Hardtop
Peter Silver 0427 171 215

PARTS FOR SALE

VE Grill complete (headlight bezel, grille,
bonnet strip) almost perfect \$400.
VE grill complete in 'driver' condition \$300.
1 x pair VF/VG hard top rear bezel & lenses
\$300 brand new
Steve 0417 670 106

1972 GB Galant parts, bumper, interior, lights,
grille, etc
Jim 0418 833 786

Plymouth / Dodge Rallye Rims 15x8 275 New
Rims + New Tyres x 2 \$700. 14x7 225 Old Rims
+ New Tyres x 2 \$500. BF Goodrich Radial TA
(RWL).
George 0412 794 412

Wrecking AP-CM valiants.
John 0419 146 294
or email karndakorunye@bigpond.com

PARTS WANTED

1977 LB Lancer Hatch front bumper bar
(chrome) and left front fender indicator
Jim 0418 833 786

2 x S-Series mirrors;
book – *From Horse to Horse Power*
by SA Cheney, Dodge dealer
Lesley

Extractors for VJ Hardtop 265
– also whole exhaust and muffler needed
Darren 8281 5999

Stock exhaust manifolds (L&R)
to suit AP6 273 V8.
Steve O'Donnell 0409 613 730

5" rims early stud pattern (from VF model)
any number
Allan Pike 8352 1383

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<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Event / Location</u>	<u>Host</u>
Tue, 11-Dec-12	7:30 PM 6:00 PM	Club Christmas Meeting, Model T Rooms BBQ beforehand !	CCCSA 0412 426360
Sat, 29-Dec-12	6:00 PM	JAF's Last Cruise meet @ West lakes Shopping Centre	'Jaf' Staples
Tue, 8-Jan-13	7:30 PM	Club Meeting, Model T Rooms Looking for ACD volunteers!	CCCSA
Sat, 19-Jan-13	4:00 PM	Cruise to Tanunda Cruise-On Rod Meeting Meet @ Clubrooms (or Munno Para 4:30pm)	CCCSA
Sat, 9-Feb-13	7:00 PM	Warm-up Cruise (pre-MegaCruise) Meeting point TBC, possible combined Run	CCCSA
Tue, 12-Feb-13	7:30 PM	Club Meeting, Model T Rooms Looking for ACD volunteers!	CCCSA
Thu, 14-Feb-13 Thu, 21-Feb-13	7:30 PM	ACD Volunteers Info meetings TBC, with Model-T Clubroom availability	Jason R 0413 426360
Sat, 23-Feb-13	3:00 PM 6:00 PM	MoPar Mega Cruise Meet & Greet @ Urrbrae HS Car park BBQ After the Cruise	CCCSA
Sun, 24-Feb-13	9:00 AM	All Chrysler Day 2013 - 50 Yrs of Tonsley Pk Urrbrae Ag. HS Oval	CCCSA
Tue, 12-Mar-13	7:30 PM	Club Meeting, Model T Rooms ACD wrap-up & video	CCCSA
15-17-Mar-13	All Day	Chryslers on the Murray CCC Group tour to Albury-Wodonga	Details: Di Hastwell

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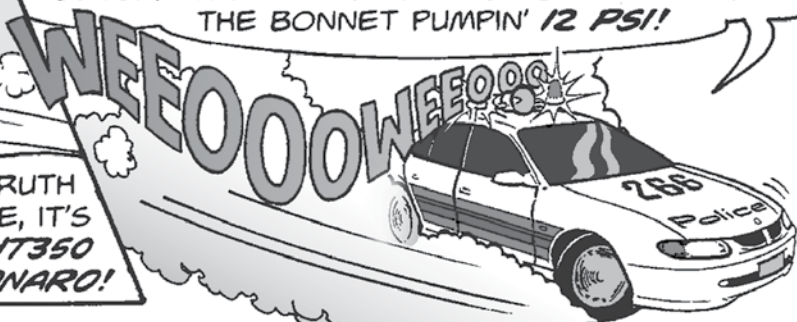
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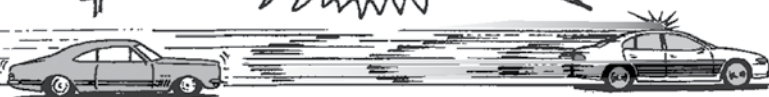
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