

# 2022 GSRA President's Report



We're back..!!!

2022 saw us finally emerge from all the lockdowns and travel restrictions to return to a full year of racing our much-loved classic cars while enjoying the company of our Group S Racing fraternity. I want to extend a big thank you to all our GSRA Members who participated in events this year and for your on-going commitment to our Association. Having completed my first year in the driver's seat (President) I want to thank you for the support given to myself and to our dedicated team of committee and ex-officio members. There is a mountain of work shared amongst our team and your support is greatly appreciated.

## **Acknowledgment**

I wish to acknowledge our past presidents (don't panic, I haven't gone all woke on you). I particularly want to pay tribute to our immediate past President Alex Webster who has continued to work tirelessly in his role as VP. I would like to take this opportunity to recognise his enormous effort over 10 years of service on the GSRA committee. Much of the current success of the GSRA can be attributed to Alex's efforts - thank you. To Kent, Brian, Colin, André and Geoff we often lean on you as a source of wisdom, guidance and knowledge when it comes to technical aspects of our category - thank you.

To our office bearers Sam Narkiewicz -Treasurer and Damien Meyer - Secretary, thank you for carrying out your important duties that are essential to the smooth running of our organisation. Being based in Melbourne and running a national association can be challenging and I would like to acknowledge the efforts of Nick Sebesfi. Nick has been our 'man on the ground' at NSW events. These events benefitted greatly from your hard work and effort - thank you Nick.

## **GSRA Committee 2023**

President - Tom Walstab

Vice President - Alex Webster

Treasurer - Sam Narkiewicz

Secretary - Damien Meyer

Committee - Nick Sebesfi

Committee - Simon Meyer

I congratulate the committee members of their appointment and welcome Simon Meyer to the general Committee. Simon brings both racing and business experience to our team and we congratulate him on his appointment and look forward to his contribution.

Hung Do is stepping down from the committee in 2023 and I can't thank him enough for his significant contribution to the GSRA over many years. Hung manages all our championship point scoring as well as our GSRA website. This task is a huge responsibility and a mountain of work which Hung has taken on for many years. I am relieved to announce that Hung is continuing to manage both of these important tasks as an ex-officio role. Hung is an unsung hero of Group S, and we couldn't be more grateful of your efforts - Thank you Hung.

## Membership

Our membership base remained strong in 2022. We had a few drivers retire from racing and we welcomed a number of new members to our group. Our membership consistently sits around the 150 mark which makes us a significant force in historic racing and gives us a strong voice to ensure the growth of Group S Racing and historic racing.

## Racing review 2022

A full racing calendar saw Group S at the following events -

Wakefield HSRCA All Historic Summer 2022

Phillip Island Classic 2022

Historic Winton 2022

HSRCA Sydney Classic 2022

Historic Queensland 2022

Winton Festival of Speed 2022

ARDC Super70 2022

Sandown Historic 2022

HSRCA - Summer Festival 2022

We had over 250 entries at these events with the largest being at Phillip Island Classic with 51. Michael Byrne was our most travelled member attending 8 of the 9 events, closely followed by Doug Barbour with 7 events. The average number of events attended by members was 2.5 with some members still finding travel a challenge in 2022. Sadly, we have seen Wakefield Park closed to racing. We have expressed our formal support to the groups fighting to have it return and we will continue to support that important cause. We need to fight to protect our race tracks if we are to enjoy our motorsport into the future.

## Lap Records

We had a number of lap records broken this year. Congratulations to the following drivers broke these records.

SMSP 'GP'	Sbd	Terry Lawlor	Shelby GT 350	01:46.5	11.06.22
Phillip Island	Sba	Simon Meyer	MG Midget	01:52.7	12.03.22
Winton Long	Sba	Damian Meyer	MG Midget	01:36.8	07.08.22
Morgan Park	Scb	Mike McKelliget	Datsun 260Z	01:28.5	08.07.22

## Racing in 2023

Once the racing calendar for 2023 has been finalised we will publish it on TeamApp and our Website. We encourage our members to enter events as early as possible as this helps our negotiations for more track time and allocation of space for our members in garages and the paddock area. We will continue to hold social gatherings and provide a dedicated Group S paddock at events. We encourage you to bring friends and family to our events and we will make sure they receive a warm welcome.

### **SA Cars**

Once the mainstay of Group S racing, we have sadly seen a decline in their numbers in recent years. I know there is tight group of SA drivers who continue to race and I want to acknowledge the extra effort and commitment it takes to keep your aging cars on the track. We are pushing promoters for second grids at events where possible to ensure you're racing with cars of similar performance and pace. If we can get a greater number of SA cars on our grids we can push for more second grids at events. Phillip Island in 2023 will have two grids and I encourage any SA drivers out there to dust off their cars and come racing again. Please reach out to me if there is anything you think I can do to help you get back on the track.

### **Driving Standards**

We enjoy a high level of driving standards in Group S. Members are reminded to follow drivers briefing instructions at events and our own Driver Code of Conduct (available on TeamApp and our Website). You're racing with friends and fellow members and remember the damage bill from car-to-car contact is greater than the value of the \$10 plastic trophy. Play nicely and make sure you're having fun whilst respecting your fellow competitors.

### **National Race Numbers**

A reminder that our national reserved racing numbers are used by event promoters to determine who is eligible to display a racing number at events. You must be an active racer in Group S events to retain your reserved racing number.

### **TeamApp**

TeamApp continues to be our primary communication portal. We set up dedicated event groups so that messaging is directed to those competitors only. Please ensure that you have your notifications enabled. You can opt out to specific notifications and chats if they are not of interest, but having ALL notifications off may risk you missing out on important information. Please update your PERSONAL DETAILS. This information is used by the committee and event coordinators so it's important that it is up to date.

### **Annual Survey**

We will be sending out a general survey to gather members feedback in the new year. The survey will cover a wide range of topics related to the current and future direction of our association. Please feel free to contact me directly if there are ever any issues you would like addressed.

### **Group S Championship Presentations**

Our annual championship presentations will be held at Phillip Island Classic in 2023. With two grids and close to 80 entrants expected it should be a great occasion. We will advise timing closer to the event for drinks, nibbles and the trophy presentation time.

## **Social Media**

I'd like to thank Nick Taylor for his continued good work promoting the GSRA on various social media channels. This is vital work to help us attract new members and supporters to our group. Instagram - We're reaching about 1300 accounts per month with large spikes and engagement around events. 'Likes' has dropped, however views of stories has increased - this reflects the change in user preferences (they look to look, not like). Our followers hasn't increased greatly (about 9%) however this is consistent with the medium given changes to algorithms and competition from other content providers.

Facebook - We're seeing a similar trend here with engagement around 1100 per month with spikes around events. Followers up about 7%. I believe we have our audience - members and their family and friends as well as car and vintage race enthusiasts. Our audience remains 80% male and 35+ in age (Instagram trends slightly younger).

It's important to remember the purpose of social media for our club... it's where our members search for pictures and see what everyone is up to when they're not competing. It's a place prospective members go to seeking a flavour of what our club and racing is about.

## **Sponsorship**

Our sponsor partners for 2022 were VP Racing Fuels and Bowden's Own. As part of our sponsorship agreements our members received generous product gifts from both these sponsors which, from the feedback I received, were greatly appreciated. To have sponsors whose commercial interest aligns with Group S and historic racing is fantastic and I encourage all members to support these companies.

## **Thank you to all GSRA Members**

In signing off for 2022, I want to say thank you for having me as your group's president in 2022 and again in 2023, it's a great honour and a role I truly enjoy. Have a safe and merry Christmas and I look forward to a big year of Group S racing in 2023.



### **Tom Walstab**

President

Group S Racing Association

6/12/2022