



2023 GSRA President's Report

That's 2023 done..!! So is it just me or was that over way too fast.

I hope you've enjoyed another full year of racing your classic car, had some close on track battles and embraced the camaraderie of our Group S Racing community. I want to extend my thanks to all our GSRA Members who participated in events this year and 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.

Election Results for GSRA Committee 2024

President - Tom Walstab
Vice President - Alex Webster
Treasurer - Sam Narkiewicz
Secretary - Damien Meyer
Committee - Simon Meyer
Committee – Tammie Hotz
Committee – Doug Barbour

I congratulate the committee members on their appointment and welcome Tammie Hotz and Doug Barbour to the general Committee. Tammie and Doug bring a mixture of racing, business and organisational experience to our team and we congratulate them on their appointment and look forward to their contribution.

Alex Webster has continued to work tirelessly in his role as VP and I want to again thank him for all his hard work. To our committee members and office bearers Sam Narkiewicz (Treasurer), Damien Meyer (Secretary) and Simon Meyer, Nick Sebesfi thank you for carrying out your important duties that are essential to the smooth running of our organisation. Nick Sebesfi is stepping down from his general committee position in 2024 and I would like to acknowledge Nick's huge efforts over the years, the NSW events have benefited greatly from your hard work and effort, thank you Nick.

To Kent, Brian, Colin, 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.

Hung Do continues his hard work behind the scenes managing 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 shouldered for many years. I am relieved to announce that Hung is continuing to manage both of these important tasks as an ex-officio role in 2024, thank you Hung.

Life Members

We proudly celebrated the announcement of our LIFE MEMBERS with a special presentation at Phillip Island in 2023.

BRIAN WESTON
COLIN WILSON-BROWN
KENT BROWN
GEOFF BYRNE
MIKE BYRNE



Awarded in recognition of service to the GSRA as an official or office bearer, having competed in over 100 Group S meetings, held continuous membership and unanimously voted by the GSRA Committee as having upheld the spirit, values and best interests of our proud club. All of our inaugural life members were instrumental in the formation and establishment of the GSRA and we take this opportunity to thank them for their continued and ongoing contribution.

Membership

Our membership base remained strong in 2023. We had a few drivers retire from racing and we welcomed a number of new members to our group. Our membership consistently sits above 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. Our membership renewals are strong and it let's like we will continue to grow our club numbers.

Racing review 2023

Philip Island Classic 2023 (Vic)
HRCC Autumn Historic 2023
Historic Winton 2023 (Vic)
HSRCA Sydney Classic 2023 (NSW)
Shannons Historic Queensland Raceway 2023 (Qld)
Winton Festival Of Speed 2023 (Vic)
ARDC MasterBlast 2023 (NSW)
Baskerville Historics 2023 (Tas)
Historic Sandown 2023 (Vic)
HSRCA Summer Festival 2023 (NSW)

There is no doubt we have missed Wakefield this year, there is good news with the new owners investing heavily into the track's infrastructure so Wakefield should return to our racing calendar in 2024. When the track re-opens I would encourage all GSRA members to attend and support the event. Sadly, we continue to lose race circuits in Australia so supporting them with our entries is the best way to keep them viable into the future.

We had over 276 entries at these events with the largest being at Phillip Island Classic with 67. Terry Lawlor and Darren Harris were our most traveled members attending 7 of the 10 events, closely followed by Doug Barbour with 6 events. Geoff Byrne, Tim Lynas, Joe Calleja and Patrick Townsend all attended 5 events. The average number of entrants was per event was 28, and members on average entered 2.5 events in 2023.

Lap Records

We had a number of lap records broken this year. Congratulations to all drivers broke these records, I'd encourage members to follow the link to see these fantastic results.

<https://www.groupracing.org.au/laprecords.html>

Racing in 2024

The racing calendar for 2024 has been published on TeamApp and our Website, many of the dates are unconfirmed at this point and we will update the calendar as we receive the information. 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 a tight group of SA drivers who regularly continue to race so I want to acknowledge David Orchard, Patrick Townsend, Becher Townsend, Barry Cockayne, Greg Prunster, Chris Komor and Michael Rose for 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 had two grids and saw our largest SA field with 8 cars, this was a great result 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 generally enjoy a high level of driving standards in Group S, however disappointingly there has been a rise in car-to-car contact in 2023. All members are reminded to follow driver briefing instructions at events and our own GSRA Driver's Code of Conduct (available on TeamApp and our Website). You are racing with friends and fellow members so just remember the damage bill from car-to-car contact is always going to be greater than that \$10 plastic trophy - If you find yourself in repeated conversations with other drivers over 'incidents' you may just need to consider how YOU are approaching your historic car racing. There is no room in Group S for aggressive or reckless driving, so please lose the red mist and just enjoy the fun of racing an old sports car with mates.

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. There has been an update to the App which seems to have caused a few issues due to the "new" layout. I've reached out to TeamApp for support to see how we can make accessing it easier, the website version is always an option and some people find that easier for typing in their details.

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.

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. We're reaching thousands of users per month with large spikes and engagement around events. I will have Nick post a summary of our statistics on TeamApp for review. 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 also a place prospective members go to when seeking a feel of what our club and Group S racing is about. We have also been encouraging drivers to share their in car footage to our Group S YouTube channel. This is a great way to help promote Group S and show off your driving talent...!!

Group S Championship Presentations

Our annual championship presentations will be held at Bathurst in 2024 and a follow up presentation at Phillip Island Classic, noting that 2024 event has only one grid (rotation of categories by VHRR). We will advise timing closer to the event for drinks, nibbles and the trophy presentation time for both presentations.

Sponsors

Our sponsor partners for 2023 were Bowden's Own and VP Racing Fuels. 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.

Photography

Throughout the year(s) we have have been lucky to have some amazing photography of our cars, on track racing action and candid paddock shots provided to us by Xanthea Bowman and Phil Wisewould. These photos are avialable free for members to access on TeamApp and our website gallery. While Phil is comissioned under a very modest retainer, Xanthea donates her time and effort free of charge (thank-you Xanth), don't forget to check out the photos after each race and give a thank you mention when you share them.

In signing off for 2023, I want to say thank you for being members of this fantastic organisation, we are kicking off 2024 with a return to Mount Panorama in Bathurst which we be an exciting event for those competing as well as spectating. On behalf of the GSRA committee I wish you and your family a safe and Merry Christmas and look forward to a big year of Group S Racing in 2024.

Tom Walstab
President
Group S Racing Association
19/12/2023