



Group S Racing Association Inc 2024 President's Report

I need a new opening line, I started last year's report with "Wow that year went too fast" and here I am saying "Damn that year went quick". Crazy to think that its Christmas next week.

I was fortunate enough this year to attend 7 meetings in 2024 and pleasingly saw a common thread at all the meetings, that being competitive 'fast clean racing' on track and the friendly camaraderie of our Group S Racing community. I want to extend my thanks to all our GSRA Members and especially their support teams 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 significant amount of work shared amongst our team and your continued support is greatly appreciated.

Election Results for GSRA Committee 2025

President - Tom Walstab

Vice President - Alex Webster

Treasurer - Sam Narkiewicz

Secretary - Damien Meyer

Committee – Tammie Hotz

Committee – Doug Barbour

Committee - Michael McKilliget

Ex-officio - Hung Do

Ex-officio - Nick Sebesbi

Ex-officio - Brian Weston

Ex-officio - Colin Wilson-Brown

I congratulate the committee members on their appointment and welcome Michael McKilliet to the position of General Committee. Michael is an active Queensland member and I hope his inclusion will help us promote more attendance at Queensland races. I want to thank members for allowing me to continue as President, ending my tenth year on the GSRA committee it's an honour to be trusted by the group to help steer our fantastic team as we continue to grow.

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2024 new committee members Tammie and Doug as promised brought their mixture of racing, business and organisational experience to our team and we thank them to their contribution. Extra call out for Tammie's great work on this year's Enduro which was a huge success.

Alex Webster is a star and continues into his eleventh year on committee working tirelessly in his role as VP and I again want to thank him for all his hard work, Alex shares much of the heavy lifting required for the club to run smoothly and his contribution is essential - thank you Alex. To our committee members and office bearers Sam Narkiewicz (Treasurer), Damien Meyer (Secretary), Tammie Hotz, Doug Barbour and Simon Meyer, plus ex-officios Nick Sebesfi, Colin Wilson-Brown and Brian Weston, thank you all for carrying out your important duties and for your support.

Simon Meyer is stepping down from his general committee position in 2025 and I would like to acknowledge Simon's time on the committee, juggling work and young family committents is difficult and Simon leaves with the hope of returning to the committee in the near future, thanks for your contribution Simon.

Hung Do is our GSRA engine room hero and 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 2025, thank you Hung. Members should be chairing this man around the paddock - he's a bloody legend.

To our Life Members Kent, Brian, Colin, Mike and Geoff I often lean on you as a source of wisdom, guidance and knowledge when it comes to technical aspects of our category – again I thank you for your ongoing support.

Membership

Our membership remained strong in 2024, consistently around 150 members. While we said goodbye to some retiring drivers, we welcomed several new faces to our ranks. This robust membership base solidifies Group S Racing's standing as a significant force in historic racing. Members will have noticed a simplified renewal method this year and we will continue to seek ways to streamline our member interactions.

Racing review 2024

Bathurst 12Hr (NSW) - 36 drivers

Phillip Island Classic 2024 (VIC) - 44 drivers

HRCC Autumn Historic Warwick 2024 - 10 drivers

Historic Winton 2024 (VIC) - 30 drivers

HSRCA Sydney Classic 2024 (NSW) - 26 drivers

Winton Festival Of Speed 2024 (VIC) - 35 drivers

Historic Queensland Raceway 2024 (QLD) - 15 drivers

Baskerville Historics 2024 (TAS) - 16 drivers

Historic Sandown 2024 (VIC) - 30 drivers

HSRCA Summer Festival 2024 (NSW) - 34 drivers

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Again we have missed Wakefield in 2024, there is good news with the new owners investing heavily into the track's infrastructure and Wakefield is scheduled to return to our racing calendar in 2025. 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 **276** entries at these events with the largest being at Phillip Island Classic with 44. James Calvert-Jones, Andre Breit and yours truly Tom Walstab were our most traveled members attending 7 of the 10 events, closely followed by Doug Barbour and Richard East with 6 events. Alex Webster, Joe Calleja, Bill Robinson, Greg Prunster and Hugh Harrison all attended 5 events. The average number of entrants was per event was 28, and members on average entered 3 events in 2024.

On a personal racing note I attended the Baskerville Historic Event in Tasmania for the first time and can happily announce that this is one of the best historic motor racing events I've attended, the track is technical, challenging and fun, best described as a mini Bathurst with its tight bends and height eventation changes. The organisers and spectators made all the Group S drivers feel incredibly welcome. I would put this event on your historic racing 'must do' list.

Lap Records

We again had some lap records broken this year as our cars seem to get faster and faster. Congratulations to drivers set new records, I'd encourage members to follow the link to see these results. <https://www.groupsracing.org.au/laprecords.html>

Racing in 2025

The racing calendar for 2025 has been published on TeamApp and our Website, some 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.

Minimum Racing Weights introduction in 2025

The GSRA Committee views the introduction of minimum weight for all Group S cars as an important step forward to ensure the continued growth and sustainability of Group S, and retain our position as a progressive historic category, while we preserve the 'spirit' of Group S whereby drivers can race a mildly modified production sports car. I want to extend my sincere thanks to the members of the GSRA Minimum Racing Weight Sub-committee for their hard work and enormous effort to achieve this important development for the future of Group S.

MSA Technical Delegate

Bob Buck continues in his important role as Group S Technical Delegate, I want to acknowledge Bob's dedication to such an important aspect of our racing in what can at times be a thankless task, so I want to assure him that his efforts are greatly appreciated - I don't know how at 106 years old he's still got the energy ;-) hehe. Thanks Bob!

SA Cars

C'mon guys we need you...!!! 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 regularly continue to race so I want to acknowledge Andrew Gibson, 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 2025 will have two grids and I hope we can exceed our largest SA field of 8 cars, 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, pleasingly there has been a drop in car-to-car contact in 2024, so I congratulate all members for heeding our plea to improve our overall driving standards. 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). While this year was a great improvement I employ members to consider that you are racing with friends and fellow members and the damage bill from car-to-car contact is always going to be greater than that \$10 trophy - a reminder to all that there is no room in Group S for aggressive or reckless driving, so please keep the red mist out of our helmets and just enjoy the fun of racing a classic 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. I note the website version is always an option and some people find that easier for typing in there 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 work promoting the GSRA on various social media channels. Alex Webster has also been actively curating our YouTube channel and it is generating an enormous amount of interest. We're reaching thousands of users per month with large spikes and engagement around events. I encourage members to visit, view and like our videos as this helps them gain more exposure and bumps them higher on the search lists. It's 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...!!!

Sponsors

Our sponsor partners for 2024 were Apex Steel, Bowden's Own and VP Racing Fuels. As part of our sponsorship agreements our members received generous product gifts and discounts 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 been lucky to have 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 available free for members to access on TeamApp and our website gallery. While Phil is commissioned under a very modest retainer, Xanthea donates her time and effort free of charge, often braving the elements to snap that perfect shot, thank-you Xanth and Phil, don't forget to check out the photos after each race and give a thank you mention when you share them.

VHRR

There has been some significant changes at the VHRR this year with Ian Tate stepping down as it's long term president, we take this opportunity to thank Ian and recognise his service to Historic Motorsport in Australia. I have had very positive discussions with the new leadership team at the VHRR and look forward to fostering a close working relationship with the new leadership team.

Group S Championship Presentations

Our annual championship presentations will be held at Phillip Island in 2025, noting that the 2025 event has two grids and we expect this to be our most attended event for the year. We will advise timing closer to the event for drinks, nibbles and the trophy presentation time.

So that's 2024 done, I want to extend my thanks to you for being a valued member. We are kicking off 2025 with a welcome return to Wakefield Park (One Raceway) in Goulburn and later in the year we'll be at The Bend in South Australia which will be a fantastic event for the drivers competing and those spectating. On behalf of the GSRA committee I wish you and your family a safe and Merry Christmas and look forward to another exciting year of Group S Racing in 2025.

Kind regards



Tom Walstab
President
Group S Racing Association Inc
17/12/2024