

AN INTRODUCTION TO MG RACING WITH THE MG OWNERS' CLUB

The MG Owners' Club was formed in 1973 to cater for the growing number of MGB and MG Midget owners who were not adequately catered for by other MG Clubs. The membership grew steadily. In 1981 it was announced that the long established MG factory in Abingdon would close and production of the MGB and Midget ranges would cease.

The reaction to this announcement was such that demonstration rallies were organized and the "Save Abingdon Campaign" organized by the MG Owners' Club achieved extensive national media coverage. This resulted in the rapid growth in the membership of the MG Owners' Club, and it soon became the largest MG Club.

Despite the best efforts of the Club and its members the MG factory did shut and the Club had to focus its attention on the active preservation of the marque. The membership continued to grow through the 1980's resulting in a move to larger premises in 1983. The MG name was revived in 1983 with badge engineered versions of the front wheel drive Maestro and Montego ranges and the MG Owners' Club have extended the benefits of membership to these underestimated saloon variants.

In 1991 the Club again outgrew its offices and commissioned the building of a purpose build headquarters. The new building was opened in spring 1992 and houses all the club activities, which include a fully equipped workshop, accessory department and a comprehensive retail parts counter.

The Club membership currently stands at around 30,000 making it by far the largest one-make car club in the world. The mainstay of the club is its, 88 page full colour magazine "Enjoying MG" and a copy is enclosed for your information.

In response to requests from members it was decided in 1981 to organise a motor racing championship and the British Automobile Racing Club were approached to provide the necessary organizational support. The first race took place in May 1981 with just six cars taking part. The BARC/MGOC Championship offers a cost effective route into motor racing with many competitors using their everyday road cars for competition. The Championship grew quickly with full grids being achieved at most rounds by 1984.

In 1986 the Championship was expanded to include the modern Maestro and Montego saloon cars, this has resulted in expanding to two classes with two separate races at each Championship round. The Championship was further expanded with MGF's being admitted in 2000, the MG ZR 160 saloon in 2003 and the MG ZS 120 in 2008.

At all Championship rounds, Classes A/F and B/Z run in separate races.

The class structure is as follows:

Class A	MGB, MGB GT, MG Midget and Austin Healey Sprite
Class B	MG Maestro Efi, MG Montego Efi, MG Maestro 1600, MG ZS 120
Class F	MGF
Class Z	MG ZR 160

All cars have to run on one specified road legal Yokohama tyre which are available at a discounted price. Engine and suspension modifications kept to a minimum to uphold the clubs basic philosophy of giving close, competitive motorsport at affordable costs. All cars must retain the basic shape of the model and be fitted with all the statutory safety equipment as demanded by the Motor Sports Association who administer all motorsport in the UK.

The series has a well qualified Championship scrutineer who rigidly enforces the technical regulations thus ensuring equality of machinery which puts the basis for success upon driving skill and ability.

The Championship now has over 80 registered competitors with a very strong base of regular competitors and a healthy number of novices who benefit from open and friendly advice from the more experienced drivers.

In order that this ongoing success can be maintained we rely on recruiting novice drivers into the first rung of the motorsport ladder.

Introduction

Thank you for asking for information about the MG Owners' Club Racing Championship.

This Starter Pack is intended primarily for the novice racing driver, it gives you;

- background information about the Championship
- details about how to get started in racing
- information about the costs involved
- the 2010 racing calendar
- details of competition cars presently for sale

We have tried to be realistic about the costs involved. Racing is an expensive hobby, but we believe that the MGOC Championship represents about the best value motorsport to be found. Remember also that much expenditure is of a 'one-off' variety.

The contents of this pack cannot possibly answer all of your queries. You are welcome to contact us for further information or, better still, come to one of our races and talk to any of the competitors, they will happily give you the benefit of their experiences.

We hope that you will decide to take up motor racing. It is a sport that has few rivals for pleasure and excitement.

If you choose to join the MGOC Racing Championship, you will have joined one of the most competitive but friendly Championships in the country. We shall do everything we can to ensure that those first, stressful race days are as trouble free as possible.

Good luck and we hope to see you soon. If you need any further information or advice please do not hesitate to contact the MG Owner's Club on 01954 231125

What is the MGO C Racing Championship?

The Championship was created in 1981 by the British Automobile Racing Club and the MG Owners Club to provide exciting racing at an affordable cost for members owning MG sports and saloon cars.

Since then the championship has developed into one of the foremost single-make racing championships in the country and now competes at all of the major racing circuits in the UK.

The success of the Championship has meant that there are now two separate races at each meeting:-

- * Class A for rear wheel drive sports cars (MGBs, Midgets, and Sprites)
- * Class B for front wheel drive saloons (Maestros, Montegos and ZS's)
- * Class F for MGF
- * Class Z for MG ZR 160

The roots of the Championship have not, however, been forgotten. The strict regulations permit MG owners with limited budgets to compete, and, there is nothing to prevent you driving your road going MG, with suitable modifications, to the circuit to race in the series. The regulations also encourage close, competitive racing, a fact that will become obvious if you come along to watch one of our races.

The Championship prides itself on the fact that whilst the racing is competitive the relationship amongst drivers is one of co-operation, and novices are actively welcomed. If a competitor has problems all efforts will be made to help him or her achieve the starting grid. What happens after that, is of course a different story!!

The Championship appeals to competitors of all levels of ability, ages and both sexes.

The only requirements are:

- A car to race
- An enthusiasm for motor sport
- A sense of adventure

How do I become a Competitor?

All motorsport in the UK is governed by the Motor Sports Association (MSA) who issue competitors' licences and the Blue Book which contains the basic rules of the sport, which are applicable to all forms of competitive motorsport.

Prior to applying for a Competition licence all novices are obliged to purchase the MSA starter pack which includes basic information, the Blue Book and video.

As a novice you must then:

* obtain a medical form to be completed by your doctor (this will have to be renewed every one or two years depending upon your age)

and

* Complete the MSA approved ARDS test. This is a half day driving and written test at an approved racing school circuit. This is intended to test your knowledge of race procedures and basic competence, you are not expected to drive at racing speeds.

On satisfactory completion of this you will then be able to apply for a National B race licence.

The approximate costs involved in obtaining a Competition licence are currently:

MSA Starter Pack	£ 50.00
Medical Certificate	£ 50.00
MSA ARDS Course	£250.00
National B Licence	£ 50.00

The MGOC championship is administered by the British Automobile Racing Club (BARC) and you will need to be a Racing Member. You will also have to be a fully paid up member of the MGOC and to formally register for the Championship. The costs involved are as follows:

BARC Racing Membership	£105.00
MGOC Membership	£ 5.00 (1 x lifetime payment)
+ annual payment of	£36.00
MGOC Championship Registration	£40.00

What other initial costs are involved?

Motorsport in this country has an excellent reputation for safety, and the MSA imposes strict safety regulations. You must, therefore, wear an approved helmet, flameproof clothing etc., before you are allowed to compete. Part of the scrutineering process before each race is to ensure that your clothing conforms to current regulations.

Details of minimum standards are contained in the MSA Blue Book.

As a general rule:

- * Do not spend any money on safety equipment until you are satisfied that it conforms with current (or proposed future) regulations.
- * You get what you pay for. Spend as much as your budget will permit.

The following costs represents recommended clothing that meets current minimum standards:

Overalls (to FIA 2000)	£250.00
Helmet (to BS 6658 – 85 Type A/FR or Snell SA 2005)	£150.00
Boots	£ 70.00
Gloves	£ 40.00
Balaclava	£ 20.00
Timing Transponder	£200.00

All you need now is a car.

How do I obtain a car to race in the Championship?

You have two options in obtaining a suitable racing car:

1. To purchase an existing racing car
2. To modify a road-going MG for race use

Purchasing an existing racing car

This is the easiest and cheapest option in the long term. If the car has recently been raced in the MGOC series it is likely to possess all the necessary modifications and to conform with current regulations. Furthermore, the price of the car is unlikely to reflect the full costs of converting.

As a general rule you can expect to pay the following minimum prices for a car modified for MGOC racing:

MGBGT	£4000
MGB Roadster	£5000
MG Midget/Sprite	£4000
MG Maestro/Montego	£1500
MGF	£5000
MG ZR 160	£6000

A car which has undergone more development and possesses a history of recent racing success will obviously command a higher price.

Details of MGOC championship cars currently for sale are attached. An updated list can be obtained at anytime by contacting the MG Owners' Club.

When buying a previously raced car, consider the following:

- * When was it last raced. (It may need modifying to meet current MSA regulations)
- * Does it have the approved Yokohama tyres.
- * In what series was it raced. (Does it comply with MGOC regulations)
- * How many races since last engine re-build.
- * What spares are included in the price.
- * Is a trailer available at extra cost.
- * Is a timing transponder included in the price.

Race Preparation of a Road-Going MG

It is perfectly feasible to modify your own MG at reasonable cost to conform with MSA and MGOC championship regulations. Remember however:

- * The car **must** be structurally sound
- * Safety features **must** comply with MSA regulations
- * Control tyres, etc. **must** be fitted
- * Racing places far greater stresses on car components than normal use. Check them very carefully.

In considering what modifications to make you are, as a novice, advised to spend your budget on safety and reliability rather than expensive performance modifications. Performance can wait until you gain experience.

You **must** fit the following before you start racing:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|---------|
| * Full roll cage (front and rear) | £500.00 |
| * Race harness belts (FIA approved) | £120.00 |
| * 2.5kg plumbed-in AFFF extinguisher | £100.00 |
| * Competition driver's seat | £150.00 |
| * Ignition cut-out switch | £ 50.00 |

Note: that the windscreen **must** be laminated glass.

You are also strongly advised to look closely at your brakes and suspension before you start racing. In addition to the obvious safety factors, improvements in this area will dramatically improve your lap times. As a start consider fitting:

- * New brake discs/hoses/pipes/competition pads/shoes
- * Upgraded and shock absorbers and lowered springs
- * New suspension/steering bushes
- * New wheel bearings

For these works you should allow a budget cost of £800

Most of the major mechanical components are standard and can be readily obtained from any MG supplier. However, a word about the engine! A standard road-going engine is suitable for a novice providing it is in sound condition. (you will very soon find out if it isn't). Within a few races, however, you will be seeking more power. Whilst the Regulations provide for only limited modifications a properly built 'blueprinted' engine will give you about 20% more power but will cost you £2000 +. Subsequent annual rebuilds will cost around £800.

In trying to achieve better performance you can spend, and sometimes waste, an awful lot of money. **Do not rush to spend your budget on expensive performance modifications without seeking guidance from experienced MGOC competitors.**

Tyres

All cars must use Yokohama 048 road legal treaded tyres, these are available through Adams and Page (01494 445389). They cost around £80.00 each and should last a full season.

The Trailer

Finally, you need to get your car to and from the circuits. It is possible to drive your race car to the circuit but you should notify your insurance company of the modifications you have made. A trailer is a more obvious solution unless you can afford to go in for something more exotic.

Expect to pay £1500+ for a new twin axled trailer.

Second-hand twin axled trailers can be brought from around £500, but can be difficult to source. Also don't forget to give your trailer a regular and thorough check. (Losing a wheel on the M1 at 6.00 am on a Sunday morning strains your sense of humour to the limits).

Although new trailers are expensive they are an excellent investment and hold a high re-sale value.

What are the ongoing costs of racing?

Entry Fees

The largest single cost is the race entry fee. The MGOC championship has approximately 13 rounds per year.

A race entry fee (to include qualifying) is approx. £180

For this you get a 15 minute practice morning session and a 15 minute lap afternoon race.

Travelling Expenses

Our races may be on any of the UK circuits.

Most of our races are one-day events, typically signing-on, scrutineering and qualifying in the morning and racing in the afternoon. For these events signing-on can be as early as 8.00am.

Occasionally, as a result of local restrictions, or if we have a 'double-header', the meeting is spread over two days.

In addition to travelling expenses you must also consider overnight accommodation. For those on a limited budget, circuits permit camping free of charge for competitors. The choice is yours.

Repairs and Renewals

Inevitably the stresses of racing will cause rapid wear on consumables such as brake pads, spark plugs etc. which may need replacing every six races. One set of tyres should last a novice driver a full season.

Other repairs are largely a matter of good preparation and bad luck, but it would be unrealistic to expect a full season of competitive motorsport without incurring some mechanical problems.

Licence/Club Membership Renewal

In order to continue to compete in the MGOC Championship you will need to renew your licence and BARC club membership annually. You may also need another medical examination.

Allow approximately £200.00 per year

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