

News from MontiPower | Australia

Australia, December 2021

Reported from the scene:

Round 1: Sandown Raceway

Round 1 of 2021 was held at Sandown Raceway in Melbourne. With Phil Chester's team mate not racing due to unexpected family circumstances there were two V8's remaining in the field. Phil Chester qualified on pole position for all races and left most races from start to finish. In the last race of the weekend Ben Muller in another MGB GT V8 led the race for two or three laps until Phil re-passed him on the final lap to take the race and round win.

Round 2 2021: Winton

Round two of the 2021 championship saw Vince Gucciardo (team member) return with Vince claiming pole position for the first race (Vince 1:29.34 lap time and Phil 1:30.18).

Race 1 was extremely close with Phil leading for 6 of the 9-lap race until Vince passed under brakes, going on to win by 0.8 second. The following morning race 2 saw Phil drop from second to third off the start line until passing for second place on lap 5. Trying to hunt Vince down in the remaining 4 laps Phil fell short by 0.6 second with Vince taking his second straight win and Phil again 2nd place.

Race 3 later on the Sunday was on a damp track, but not wet enough for wet tyres. It had become obvious that the set up in Phil's car was not ideal (it was discovered after the race that the shock absorbers had zero rebound and varying bump rates – a complete re-valving was needed). In what was a mirror of the first two races, Vince claimed the win with Phil again second, although this time on a damp track car-handling was proving difficult and so finishing was the main goal.

Round 3: Phillip Island Grand Prix Circuit

Having had the shock absorbers fixed and suspension correctly set up, the race car felt again like a race car. Track conditions however for round 3 were challenging with early morning races, cold damp track and occasional rain making things very interesting.

An early Qualifying on a greasy cold track was extremely challenging with Vince again, claiming pole position and Phil 2nd. Race 1 was held just after lunch and finally the track had dried out a little. Phil could see how the car now handled with the new suspension set up. In what was a shortened race due to an overnight storm that caused damage at the circuit and delays to the morning qualifying sessions, Phil quickly took the lead against Vince and went on to win the race.



Race 2 on Sunday morning saw Phil starting from pole position. Track conditions again were greasy (begin the first race category of the day and early in the morning), with Vince leap frogging Phil into first place. Lap 3 saw Phil drop from second to third with Robin Bailey charging through the field. This would remain the finishing order - Vince 1st, Robin 2nd and Phil 3rd.

Race 3 on Sunday afternoon was relatively uneventful, except for a spin that Phil had on the second last lap. Momentarily dropping to fourth place Phil recovered to third where he remained at the end.

Round 4: Sandown Raceway

The fourth and final round of the year was back at Sandown Raceway. Phil had two goals – to win the championship and try to beat the lap record in a race. After securing pole position and a race 1 win with a lap time 0.26 seconds outside of the lap record, the weekend was set to be a good one.

The first race on Sunday saw a damp track after intermittent rain (no chance of breaking the lap record in this race). Phil and Vince had a great race at the front of the field with Phil taking the win by 0.071 seconds over Vince. Race 3 later that day was shortened due to a major crash in the race preceding ours. Starting from pole position Phil had two laps (until catching lapped traffic) to try to break the lap record. On lap three managing a lap time of 1:16.2721, Phil finally had the lap record – after five years of trying. The race win also saw a fifth Championship in the category for the Montipower MGB GT V8.

Season 2022 commences in February at Sandown Raceway again with the first three rounds being live streamed!