

January 2012

£2 No. 334

Mascot

The Magazine of the Midget & Sprite Club



www.midgetandspriteclub.co.uk



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Also see the Club Nights section on page 4 for new areas and contacts.

Compiled by Richard Flynn (richard.flynn@live.co.uk). Please advise me of any changes, errors etc.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL: IF YOU EXPERIENCE 'MASCOT' PROBLEMS UPON RENEWAL, PLEASE CONTACT THE MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY OR THE TREASURER STRAIGHT AWAY. The Committee

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January Editorial

Phew! January's magazine is always a challenge due to the scarcity of area reports, but thanks to your continued input of articles, stories and anecdotes, I'm happy to report that *MASCOT* is once again full. If not bursting at the seams, then happily suffering a bit of post festivities excess, somewhat like its editor.

What do you have in store for the coming year, any foreign trips planned? "Gaps" and I will make our annual pilgrimage to France for the Le Mans 24 Hours in the middle of June. In addition, the Le Mans Classic makes its Biennial appearance a month later. So all being well and with the permission of my two bosses (the home one and the work one) and the economy being kind, I should be heading south over the water (and I don't mean to Brixton) at least twice this year. The only question is will I be taking Euros, Francs or beads?

Once again the intention is to enter "Gaps" into a few competitions. Participating in various Sprints and Autotests throughout the year as well as perhaps a couple of Hillclimbs too. I had planned to attend the Prescott Hillclimb School last year to get some proper instruction, but I just seemed to run out of time. Hopefully 2012 will see me booking up to get some much needed auto sportive education before throwing myself and my car at immovable objects such as trees, grass banks and hills (on Sprints, the obstacles tend to run out of the way as you veer towards them).

The wonderful Ace Café just off London's North Circular Road, continues to be the monthly meeting place for the London Area of MASC, which we are lucky enough to share with the Lotus Seven Club and the multitude of amazing and eclectic classic vehicles which attend the Classic Cars night, sponsored by *Classic Cars Magazine* on the second Tuesday of each month. I know that many members from various areas organised visits to the Ace throughout last year and it was a pleasure to meet them and their cars.

Any of you who attended the Silverstone Classic last year would agree that it was a magnificent event. Obviously the club will be supporting it again in 2012. In addition in this month's *MASCOT*, the Midget & Sprite Club are proud to be able to announce its attendance at the second Donington Historic Festival. This wonderful circuit will be hosting the festival on the 5th and 6th of May. You will see all the information that you will need on the inside back page of this month's magazine. I am personally very excited that we will be attending and supporting Donington, as only a couple of years ago we were very close to losing the circuit to redevelopment.

I look forward to meeting as many members and their cars in 2012. Have a great year. I know that I will.

Gary & Gaps

The deadline for articles and reports for inclusion in next month's magazine is Monday 16th of January.

The statements and opinions expressed in each and every issue of the *MASCOT* are not necessarily the considered views of the Midget and Sprite Club. The views expressed by the editorial contributors, letter writers and advertisers are their own and do not necessarily reflect the view of the Club. The Midget and Sprite Club accepts no responsibility for the results of following contributor's advice, nor does it necessarily endorse the services or products offered by advertisers.

Cover shot East Anglia Area rep David Dixon's Sprite outside the Session House, the venue for their Christmas meal



Now is the time to order your new binder for your MASCOT magazines

Driving in Snow



Martin Ingall on the Monte in 1995 © Martin Ingall

Snow is one of the trickiest weather conditions to drive in, and requires confidence and knowledge. Drive safely in snow and ice.

- 1 Check for signs of ice before driving. Anything below four degrees centigrade means ice is likely
- 2 If conditions are particularly bad then delay your journey and only drive if absolutely necessary
- 3 Stopping distances can be ten times longer in snow, so keep manoeuvres gentle and keep to major roads which are more likely to have been gritted
- 4 Tyres suddenly becoming quiet can indicate the car is driving on ice, so take care and slow down, but don't apply the brakes sharply or try and change direction quickly
- 5 Watch out for slow-moving salt spreaders and snow ploughs – avoid overtaking quickly as the grit can chip the car's paintwork
- 6 Avoid accelerating hard in snow as this can cause the wheels to dig into the snow
- 7 Put the car into the highest gear possible and lightly manoeuvre the car back and forth to slowly creep out of the snow

Avoiding skidding

Skidding is often caused by a combination of poor weather conditions and speeding.

- Leave plenty of room between you and the car in front
- Drive slowly and carefully
- Brake steadily before approaching a corner, and well in advance
- Avoid over-steering and accelerating suddenly mid-turn

If the vehicle loses grip while turning, press the clutch pedal and turn the steering wheel into the direction of the skid. Avoid braking suddenly – this can lock the wheels and prolong the skid.

Aquaplaning is another type of skid which occurs when the car makes contact with a layer of water or icy slush too fast, causing the tyres to skim across the water rather than the road.

If the car aquaplanes, try not to brake hard or steer suddenly. Let the car slow itself, or use engine braking, to reduce speed and regain grip.

What to do if you get caught in a snowdrift

If your car gets stuck in snow and you can't move it, stay in the car, leave the engine running and call for help unless help is visible nearby.

Clear snow away from the exhaust and dig away snow from the tyres and gently rock the car back and forth to gain grip. If that doesn't work, use car mats, bits of wood or anything else nearby and wedge under the tyres to gain grip.

Driving on ice

Drive gently in a higher gear to avoid wheelspin, and avoid harsh braking and acceleration. If the car starts to skid, gently ease off the accelerator and avoid braking.

If braking is necessary, pump the brakes gently – don't slam them hard. If your car is equipped with ABS (most new cars are) use it to your advantage. Try to stop in a safe place and call for help.

Club Nights

- 1st Tuesday **Essex Area** – Now meet at **The Bell**, Beckenham Road, Tolleshunt Major, CM9 8LL.
For further details contact Jane Gates Tel: 01255830 509 or
email: jgjanegates257@googlemail.com
- 1st Wednesday **Devon Area – The Dartmoor Lodge Hotel**, Ashburton, TQ13 7JW 1930 – 2200. Please
contact Dave Price for details, 01805 603133, daveprice@daveprice.plus.com
- 1st Wednesday **South Staffs & Birmingham** – Meet at **Whitacre Ex-Service & Social Club**, 66 Station
Road, Nether Whitacre, Coleshill, Birmingham, West Midlands. B46 2EH, 8.30-8.45pm
Contact: John Collins, Tel: 07970 213084 email: green_mx5@hotmail.com
- 1st Wednesday **Oxford Area** – Meet at the **Blackhorse Pub**, Gozzards Ford, Nr Abingdon. 7pm for those
eating or 8pm for those not.
Contact Grahame Gibbins at grahame_gibbins@unipart.co.uk
- 2nd Tuesday **London Area (Congestion Zone)** – Meet at **The Ace Cafe** at 7:30pm. together with the
Classic Cars Magazine night. Details: Gary Lazarus on 020 7700 5696
garylazarus@blueyonder.co.uk
- 2nd Wednesday **Heart of England**, covers Worcs, Warks, West Midlands and surrounding areas – Meet at
The Green Dragon, The Green, Sambourne, Redditch, B96 6NU, at 8.30pm as usual.
- 2nd Wednesday **North West Area** meet at **The Kilton**, turn off M6 at Jct 20 onto A50 towards
Macclesfield. Pub 4 miles on left. Please note new venue.
- 2nd Wednesday **Bristol Area** will meet at **The Rose and Crown**, Pucklechurch at 8pm. All Bristol, Bath
and surrounding areas members welcome. Contact Terry Horler on 01454 881770
- 2nd Thursday **Notts/Derby border Area** at the **Sitwell Arms** at 30 Wood Lane, Horsley Woodhouse,
Derby, DE7 6BN from approx. 8.30. Just a mile north-west of the A608/A609 crossroads.
Ian Cooke 0115 938 3838 ilc@bgs.ac.uk
- 2nd Thursday **East Anglian Area**. Previously the Cambridgeshire Area meet at **The Ferry Boat**, at
Holywell, 8pm
- 2nd Saturday **Yorkshire Area** – meet each month at **Ye Jolly Farmers Inn**, Dalton near Thirsk YO7 3HY
– please note new fixed venue – more information at <http://yorkshiremasc.blogspot.com/>
- 3rd Monday **Dorset** – Meet at **St. Peter's Finger**, Lytchett Minster, Poole, BH16 6JE 7.30pm
- 3rd Tuesday **Scotland** – Meet at Holiday Express, Keith Street, Hamilton 8:00pm. Contact John Pardo
on 01698 814791
- 3rd Tuesday **Surrey** – Meet at **The Blue Ball**, Walton-on-the-Hill, 7.00pm onwards. Contact Mike
Gorman, mike@birchwood44.freerve.co.uk Tel: 01737-552256
- 4th Thursday **Sussex** – Meet at **Bolney Stage**, Bolney, RH17 5RL from 19:00. Contact David Southcott
at dandlsouthcott@btinternet.com
- 4th Thursday **Hampshire** –New Venue! Now meeting at **The Fox and Goose**, Greywell, RG291BY.
Please ring Terry or Harriet Langridge on 01252 626063 for details.
- 4th Sunday **Kent Area** – Meet at **The Angel**, Addington Green, West Malling, Kent, ME19 5BB at
12:00 for lunch. Contact Alan Anstead, Tel: 01322 384050.
alan.anstead@btopenworld.com

- Last Monday **Wiltshire** – Meet at **The Barge Inn**, Seend, Nr. Devizes, about 7pm except on Bank Holiday Mondays when it will be the Bell Inn at Yatton Keynell near Castle Combe, 6.30pm. Contact Andy Cross on 01225 743554 or e-mail andy@cross743.freereserve.co.uk
- Last Wednesday **Home Counties North West** for members in Herts, Beds, Bucks, Berks, N. London or anyone interested! Meet at the **Chequers Inn**, Redbourn, AL3 7AD from 6:30pm. Please contact Mike or Sue Gahan on email mike@mgahan.demon.co.uk or on 07850 488636.
- Last Thursday **Somerset** – Meet at **The Lord Nelson**, Norton sub Hamdon at 7pm for those wishing to eat or at 8pm for those not. Phone Ray Darch on 01460 72040 with any queries and to ensure we will be there!
- Northern Ireland robertholmes25@hotmail.com. If enough interest, will arrange a meeting.
- South West Wales Non regular and occasional meetings and runs arranged throughout the summer months. Please contact David Hill on 01239 811307 or email: david@hill.be

Club Website

www.midgetandspriteclub.co.uk

Members only pages Password: Hardtop (which is case sensitive)

Events

Area reps please continue to make Richard Flynn aware of any events already in your diaries for 2012, so that they can be added to this "Events" section of the magazine and the website.

For the magazine Richard can be contacted at Richard.flynn@live.co.uk or 0121 559 3103

For the website Richard Mumford can be contacted at richardmumford@me.com

Market Place

Adverts to Alan Lo, 23 Charnell Road, Staple Hill, Bristol, BS16 5NE
email: alan@mobuzzing.net Tel: 0117 9572617

Wanted

Sprite Mk 1 / Mk 2, Midget Mk 1 seat locating frames (AH Spares part number XSET101) and driver's side upper seat runner with catch (Moss part number 14A5519). Any condition considered.

Please contact Eric Booth 0191 2637279; email: nickyotw@yahoo.co.uk

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Peter Edgley 07982 250253.

Sebring Sprite Replica, 1958. Road Reg. Gunmetal Grey – 1380cc comp. spec. A series; C/R (S/C) gearbox; LSD; extinguisher system; full harnesses; Minilites (2 sets). Built for F.I.S.C. race series. Excellent condition throughout. Price £18,000 (currently at Worcs area).

Owner: Richard Waller; mobile 07957200739

Uncompleted Restoration Project – 1973 MG Midget Mk 3 RWA. Dark green with wire wheels. Most work done, little to complete. £2,750 ono could deliver –

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WOVEN CAR



**Rusty Old MG Midget
Gets a Sturdy Recycled
Fabric Shell**

Take one rusty, beat up old MG Midget, two creative artists and some sturdy recycled and leftover materials and this is what you get – the Woven Car. Ann Conte and Jeanne Wiley have renovated an old clunker by re-skinning it in sturdy recycled and overstock materials. The vehicle is now on display as part of a new exhibit at the South Shore Art Center in Cohasset, MA, along with a number of other Mixed Media pieces.

Conte and Wiley took an early-model 1960s MG Midget that was previously holding firewood in a backyard and decided to completely revamp it from the undercarriage up. Their main goal was to give the car a woven basket-like exterior, so they used overstock car seat belt material (about 500 yards) to create a hatched woven cover for

the car, which they then bolted on to the metal. Wiley who is a ceramic artist with a weaving background said that the reuse project was all *“about recycling, reusing, repurposing and sustainability.”*

The interior of the car including the seats, floorboards and windshield were made out of a partially-recycled material called Corian Terra made by DuPont. The material for the car was actually donated by DuPont after the company heard the artists wanted to use it in the car, which will now be on display at DuPont’s booth at GreenBuild 2010 in November. Additionally, the car was outfitted with handmade ceramic flowers, headlights and tail lights.

by Bridgette Meinhold

Photo Credits: Gary Higgins Photography



Ann Conte and Jeanne Wiley

Letters

Imported Sprite to Australia



Hi Gary

Attached is a picture of the UK Mk1 Sprite (KSU 185) I purchased.

The car is now in Australia with Victorian Club Permit 11396 H.

MOT report that it has had 5 keepers since 1987.

I'd welcome any additional information.

Regards

Stephen Rose
Melbourne, Australia

See page 15 & 16 for more information on Stephen's Sprite.

Request from Germany

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen!

My name is Ulrich Buetow from Germany .

On a trip several years ago through England, we met Jenny and Charles in Dartmoor. They drove a green Midget with the number "LWN 823L". Every Christmas we get a letter from Jenny and Charles. In the letter, unfortunately missing the sender and we have lost the address and can not send an answer. We even drive a black MGB. Jenny and Charles live in South Wales and are also great MG enthusiasts.



Can you help us find the address? A photo of the meeting is attached.

Thank you very much.

Kind Regards

Ulrich Buetow, Germany

Ed says: Latest news is that Ulrich has now found the elusive address, so no need for you all to write in!

It Rolls Once Again

Hi Gary

Following on from our conversation earlier this evening, please find attached a picture of Ben and myself with our somewhat distressed Frogeye. After uncovering it from a mountain of mattresses, boxes, and miscellaneous items, we managed to de-seize the brakes and roll 675 BYC out into natural light for the first time in 21 years!

The car has just had its first wash since its incarceration in one of the garages shown in the background. In all honesty, the picture rather flatters the condition of the car, and it's not until you get up close, can you really appreciate all that needs doing.

Ben and I are hoping to trailer it in its current condition to the next Kent meeting in January, hopefully we'll see you there.

Regards,

Dan & Ben

Editors note: Thanks to the Photographic Database of UK Registered Mk1 Sprites, the first owner John Parker and Dan are now in direct contact.



Then, as it was in 1962

Now, as it is today



Correction

In regards to the Kent Monthly Meet report in the November issue of *MASCOT* I would like to make it clear that the Lenham Motor Company was not present at this event. The company represented by Mr Ian Langford has no affiliation to the real Lenham Motor Company which is currently trading out of High Hurstwood East Sussex under CCK Historic.

Thanks,

Daniel H Lackey

01825 733060 www.cckhistoric.com

CCK Historic, Rosehill Farm, Burnt Oak Road, High Hurstwood, East Sussex. TN22 4AE

Old Copies of *MASCOT*

Hi Gary,

Just a quick query. I noticed a number of back copies of *MASCOT* on the MASC stand at the recent classic car show at the NEC. I picked up a couple of copies but there were some that I don't have. As I've only been a member for a year, I'm wondering whether it's possible to acquire old copies of the magazine. I'd be grateful if you could let me know. Thanks in anticipation.

Regards,

David Markham markham71@tiscali.co.uk

*Ed's note: Can any of our members who are looking to clear out old copies of *MASCOT* be prepared to help David out?*

If you have any questions or opinions which you wish to have printed in *MASCOT*, please send them to me:
editor@midgetandspriteclub.co.uk

Or by post to: Gary Lazarus, 40B Hungerford Road, London. N7 9LP UK.

New Members



Bill Piggott's newly acquired (ex-Graham Goodall's) 2012 MASC NEC show car

We extend a warm welcome to the following new and rejoined members

4535	David & James Maskell	Essex	Sprite	Mk 2
4536	Peter Tustin	Worcs	Midget	Mk 3
4537	Stephen Griffiths	West Midlands		
4538	Dan & Ben Collins	Essex	Sprite	Mk 1
4539	Mark Fullwood	Staffordshire	Midget	1500
4540	Howard Darby	Channel Islands	Midget	Mk 3
4541	John Ford & Carol Ford	Kent		
4542	David Bell	London	Sprite	Mk 1
4543	Peter Sears	Hampshire	Sprite	Mk 1
4544	Klaus Hoefs		Midget	1500
4545	Gareth David Williams	Cheshire	Sprite	Mk 4
4546	Sean Leverton	Devon	Midget	Mk 3
4547	Rylan Williams	Kent	Midget	1500
4548	Henrik Saeger		Midget	Mk 3 RWA
4549	Bill Piggott	Shropshire	Sprite	Mk 1



David Bell's Frogeye, currently being restored



German based Klaus Hoefs' Midget 1500



*Tom Marnham and
his Mk3 Midget
(joined last month)*



*David Maskell with son
James and their friend
Mark in the middle
with the Mk2 Sprite*

*Peter Sears
Mk1 Sprite*





Rylan Williams'
Midget 1500



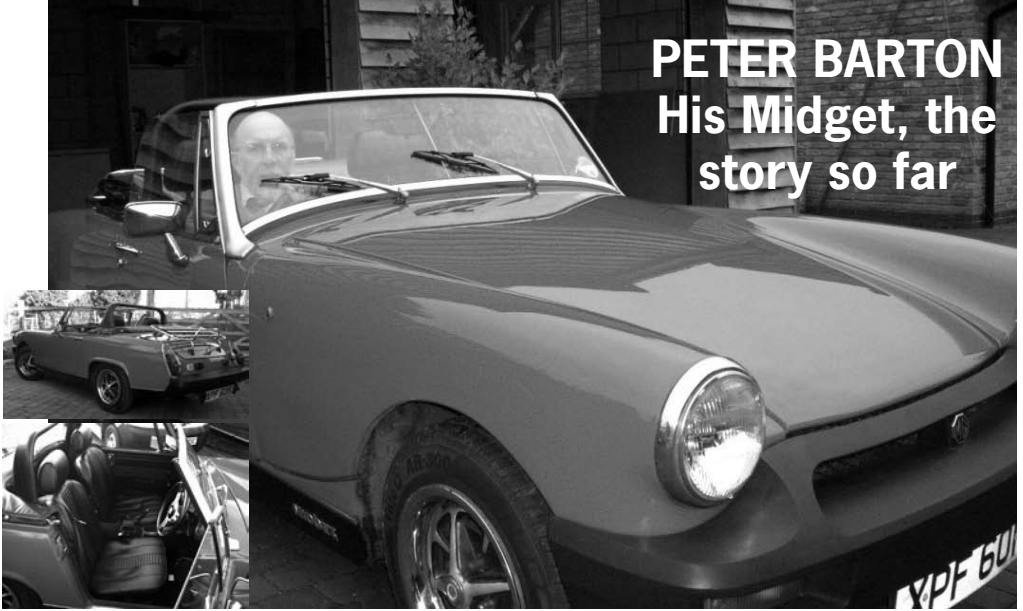
Steve Greenhaff's
1972 Midget fresh
after its eight year
rebuild

Peter Tustin and friend
Sue with Snowy (note
the number plate)



PETER BARTON

His Midget, the story so far



Granddad has bought an MG Midget! My sons/daughter-in-laws thought I was mad – the grandsons thought it was great.

It all started because the wife could no longer drive a 'normal' car with gears and a clutch (left ankle problems), she needed an automatic and the Volvo XC90 was proving expensive for dodging around. So we looked at a 10 year old automatic VW Lupo at the local showroom with only 7000 miles on the clock; and there it was – a nice shiny black MG B roadster, 35 years old – it may make a change from my not so elderly Porsche, I thought. A test run confirmed I fancied a roadster but this beast was quite a handful, some wheel wobble and, on closer examination, needed more work than the price tag justified; also, in part exchange, not enough was offered for the 944! – I did not buy!

I was idly looking on the internet at MG Midgets wondering what they would be like; there in Brighton was this red Midget, 34 years old, unused for the last 4 years, it had been recently MOT tested and was at a budget price. Managed to jump the queue of viewers and had a quick look and short drive up the cul-de-sac – fortunately my company insurance covered for driving any vehicle!

The Midget was covered in dust and bird pooh; but it was all there, sound hood, the engine crisp and responsive; the seats were in good condition etc.; you guessed it! – I negotiated a deal, a lot, lot less than the MGB!

My gut feeling was I could not loose – I would certainly get my money back if I resold in a polished condition.

So a week later I collected the Red Devil (as we now call it) and drove it back from Brighton, some 35 miles patiently followed by the wife in the Volvo (automatic!) – We stopped in Cowdray Park to walk dogs and to take the hood down. The last leg of the journey home was fun! – To quote the wife “suddenly this little red car disappeared into the distance in a cloud of dust!”

As soon as I got it home – a good wash, application of wax polish and back-to-black on the bumpers – vacuum out the confetti (last serious use for the previous owner – his wedding in 2005!), and, hey presto it looked worth a “million bucks”. The shiny Red Devil was born – new plugs, points and condenser (it gives away my age – I know what these are and, how to fit them!) Now it goes “like a bomb” – have not had so much driving fun for ages! By the way the wife has the Lupo – a much more boring drive; the Midget was less than half its price and I still have the Porsche – not so boring!

The good news is I have saved money on the Porsche by putting both the MG and 944 on cherished car insurance and the price for both of them knocked £70.00 from the previous bill for the Porsche alone.

Hooray for the Midget!

Peter Barton

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Kevin Bishop's Affair with a Sprite



All complete

I originally took Betsy off the road in 1994 to have the front driver's side inner wing replaced, it had been in an accident before I purchased it in 1992 and I had intended to give the engine bay a once over as a running restoration.

Money was tight at the time after a recent divorce so I planned a nice slow job to enable me to save funds and restore parts as I went along at the weekends. I began to strip the front end out and slowly tackle the job of restoring each part, wrapping and bagging each completed item and storing all the original fasteners in labelled bags. This was slow going but things were progressing well



On the trailer

until future wife No.2 came onto the scene about three months later, this is when my plan went awry for a number of years and other more important things took priority, houses, our new daughter Jessica, marriage etc etc ... anything but my poor Sprite, abandoned to the corner of a dark but luckily dry garage.

Now it's the year 2000, six years after the start of my project, and after a house move I rediscovered Betsy, and since I was now relatively flush, actually found some impetus to get things moving again.

So £300 on new chromework at Marque Restore in Coventry (Highly recommended) and £3,000 on a full bodywork "restoration" and respray the correct colour (About that time I received the heritage certificate



The Sprite before – Expensive storage



Original sill bodge

and I saw that the car was the incorrect colour, it was Old English white and should be Glacier White) this work being done by a now defunct MG garage in Worcestershire (not recommended ... more on this later).

So things were starting to move forward in 2000 when suddenly I was informed that child No.2 (a son, Jake) was on his way and the savings I have earmarked for the engine bay and interior restoration were commandeered for Mothecare!

In 2005 I purchased another car, a rusty old blue Mk IV Austin Sprite (I didn't realise it was one of these rare ones until I was looking at some pictures recently) which I intended to use as a template car and for the odd spare to ensure I can put all the bits in the correct places, but then another house move in 2006 to a large house in the country is the latest thing to get in the way, and the ¾ of an acre of garden completely disposes of any potential weekend free time.



No floor

So Betsy is still in a garage but now actually resigned to storing all sorts of useless stuff (including a couple of mice in the passenger seat) and the blue Sprite is sold because of space issues and a nagging other half.

Now onto 2011 and as is the theme with this restoration another divorce goes by and I find myself in Nottingham with a new partner and plenty of time and a little spare cash. "I think I'll get my Sprite up here so I can work on her" was my absent minded comment one day in January. "No way is that bloody thing going in my garage until it's restored!" was Sharon's riposte, a little pointed but unequivocal.

So I do some investigation and look for a professional outfit that is fairly local to get the project over the line (It's been 17 years and Betsy deserves to be back on the road now) so on the phone to A.R. Griffiths in Derby and the car is booked in for a two month "finish off".

Two months later and all is going well with the finish off when Andy at the workshop calls me and asks me to come in and see a hole in the floor and drivers sill ... OMG I could have climbed through it and this was supposed to be a restored body shell ... if the previous restorer had told me about this in 2000 I would have had the lot done.

In the end it was manna from heaven because we decided on a new floor, inner and outer sills both sides as this would enable them to open up the door gaps which had always been a problem. The icing on the cake was Lee, the young lad who did the work, he treats the cars he works on like his own and is very methodical and professional.

Another two months and more ££££ than I care to think about and Betsy is now complete and sitting in my garage and my 10 year old son Jake has had his first outing in the car he used to pretend to drive in my garage all those years ago.

I seem to remember promising him the car at one stage in the past but now she's complete I can't bear to be parted from her and luckily he seems to have forgotten ... ssshhh!

Kevin Bishop



After The Motor Disaster a Revived Sprout Gets Out and About

RBK 159 Part 4

Photographs better than reality, but still the most fun per pound spent I've owned. Frog MASCOT came from previous long-term owner and looks like staying on...

The Sprite was ready to collect from Mike Rolls MG, after the expenditure of £2,215 in May 2010. The result was a revived A-series with an anticipated 55 horsepower by 5800 rpm. We expected to use the Rawles Rolling road in Autumn 2011 when the unit had covered over 2000 miles and should have been at its best. Sadly, oil pressure drooped over a sustained 4500 revs. Before 30-35psi became an issue, I saw 5500 and 91 mph in Summer 2011 circuit use, so 998 Mini Cooper horsepower seems a realistic guesstimate.

For 200 miles after collecting my Frog in 2010, with refreshed motor from Mike Rolls, I took things really easy. It had been a

wallet-bleeding lesson in demanding proper replacement oil filter seal worth less than a couple of quid, versus a motor rebuild in excess of £2000. BUT, without that filter disaster and consequent total oil loss, I would have kept the tired old exchange motor and not had some of the sportier motor pleasures recounted later.

As the running-in miles slipped by, I enjoyed Sprite's sharp steering, improved drum brakes and docile motor. All better than I remembered of hasty road test miles in 1098 and 1275cc Spridgets.

The new windscreen I purchased from Frogeye Spares, slotted within my older frame. Locally, Aidy's body shop utilised the new rubber surround I had also bought in that Midlands Frog heaven. One local rainstorm



Sprites do fun, by the mega-grin. July 2011's Silverstone Classic weekend was amazing not just for the record-breaking E-type parade, but a similar 2-lap sortie on Sunday for a massive variety of club display cars gave us all a personal view of the new F1 layout.



New Screen cracked just over a year after purchase, no warranty allowed just a modest discount on replacement that is currently being fitted



Shiny aluminium oil catch tank is well made, but like the aftermarket air filter is another non-original fitting

surprise was that the baby Healey blew soapy bubbles at me! A legacy of the slippery solutions applied to ease the screen into position.

I sold my old milky screen, an older spare screen and a second surround, through the *MASCOT*, provoked by a sea of bills. This proved a bad move as that new screen cracked diagonally in July 2011...

A thousand miles of running in worries were prompted by low top gear speeds, because the original 4:1 diff allowed only 46 mph at the tight motor limit of 3000 rpm. You don't want to be at that crawl for long in 21st century traffic. Yes, you get nearly 40 mpg, but I'm happier with the 31-32 mpg that accompanied the finally bedded-in Sprite running at normal main road pace.

Some 500 miles clocked up and Sprite was now at 37 mpg. It returned to Mike Rolls for a check, the unleaded head tightened down and an oil change. Ancillary repairs included £70 replacement rpm-counter mechanical gears [cable driven from back of dynamo] and I also had an oil catch tank fitted. The tank is an attractive alloy unit via eBay, too flash for a period engine bay. As I already have a K&N air filter – and this Sprite left the factory with a now missing heater – originality is hardly rampant beneath the bonnet.

There were hiccups as the motor loosened up. There was the obvious whiff of fuel, which I fixed with shortened feed pipe and tweaked up jubilee clips. I also attached a vacuum pipe from distributor to carburettors, taped for security. I used the same sort of racer's resource to wedge under dash stays into place [hanging loose], reduce gear lever

buzz and—with comparatively high tech split rubber beading – I trimmed the sharper edges of the doors and front number plate.

Those simple trims mean I have stopped being a blood donor every time I lift the cumbersome bonnet clamshell, slashing my wrists on the edge of the number plate!

Next 2010 assignment was an MoT. Since a rear winker and the horn were not working, I took it into the nearest electrical specialist. Peter Jenkins at Auto Services laboriously sorted out a hidden trim screw rubbing through a rear wire run, reconnected a hidden horn wire and ensured that my bodge securing a headlamp rim endured. MoT passed without advisories, doubles all round!

I fitted a repro factory pattern plastic gear lever knob to replace the aftermarket Alexander item, one that had lost its badge, plus an electronic oil temperature gauge. The latter was planned to ensure the precious new motor was coddled from cold. It would sit amongst the plethora of non-functional dashboard auxiliary dials that had been installed to fill holes in the original dash! Worse still, a defunct British Leyland radio defiled that dash!

By late July and with some 800 rebuilt motor miles completed, I felt more confident. When the Low Tension [LT] lead in the distributor failed and the Sprite returned to Rolls, I asked them to fit a 3.9:1 final drive as well. The secondhand 3.9:1 diff replaced the usual 4.22:1 production item that featured through Spridget production years until later run 1275s. In Frog rpm per 1000 rpm escalated from 15.2 to 16.5 mph per thousand. In top this means 70 mph is 4242rpm instead



Quickfit SBS in North London rapidly fitted a brace of lap belts just like you find on airline seats



*With seatbelts installed
Keeping our cool at Silverstone*



of 4605 rpm and – after 1500 miles – this proved a pretty regular pace. Only that big gap between second and third remains annoying.

To prepare it for a closed event called Bring Your Own Car Day [BOYCD] run by the Guild of Motoring Writers, which included a back lane treasure hunt; I wanted some safety belts. The fastest tailored safety belt service came from Quickfit SBS, 104 miles from home. I wanted belts fitted properly, hopefully secured on Sprite's sound floors. Quickfit were rapid and neat, fitting my choice of dull green lap belts with period chrome buckles in 1 hour 50 minutes.

The total bill was £296.69p and occupants feel a mild boost in safety as the tiny two-seater tears into traffic. Weeks later, I discovered the same restraining straps, right down to the colour and clasps, on an American Airlines flight!

That 210-mile London trip was not without incident. Silence greeted the pull switch starter and the rev counter failed utterly. The non-start was just a loose nut on the coil, but it was a long time before the Smiths counter was refurbished, by which time the speedometer had failed and the end of the fuel gauge needle had vibrated off.

A 25°C September day saw the now run-in Sprite venture boldly onto the M4 and spend most of the day above 60 mph/3636 rpm, bumbling through heavy London suburban traffic happily enough unless we were at an absolute standstill for five minutes plus. A two-lap GP track outing at the 2011 Silverstone Classic provoked similar queue behaviour, but – unlike expensive machinery surrounding Sprout – it did not boil.

Autumn 2010 saw the Frog prove its mastery of lanes and tricky questions. The BOYCD event was ideal for Spriting. So agile it backtracked swiftly on missed clues strewn along narrow lanes, its top ten potential in a separate morning trial rewarded by a half point win in the afternoon.

The post-event BBQ and live group kept us away from our beds long enough to have to discover the candlelight progress of a Sprite on a damp night, but nothing wiped out my happiness at finding Sprite's natural habitat.

Read part 5 in next month's MASCOT.

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Frogeye Spares Company [Midlands] 01885 400791

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Words & images by Jeremy Walton

Lackford Engineering Midget Challenge 2011



Thruxton, Midgets and B's mixed at the start

We were delighted to welcome Lackford Engineering aboard as series sponsor for 2011.

Robin Lackford is himself a racer as well as a classic car specialist and race preparation expert. Like many other series, the challenge found the current economic climate affecting the grids. Through no fault of their own, the final races of the season went into disarray, falling victim to a planning dispute over how many races Donington Park was allowed to host during the year. However, despite these setbacks in its 35th season, the Midgets continued to provide the close racing we have come to expect from our favourite cars.

Easter Monday saw our usual trip to Castle Combe for the first outing of the year. Paul Sibley, Ian Langford and Peter Hartle were the fastest in each group during the qualifying. Robin Lackford and his son Nigel were on the grid in their respective Group B cars. Sibley again swept all before him but slowed on the last lap, allowing Reeve to close and come home second by six seconds, with Martin Morris third. Langford made a good start but if he thought he was going to have it all his own way in Group B, he was mistaken. Andrew Actman was with him all the way and the battle intensified in the closing stages with Andrew's Sebring Sprite ahead on two

occasions. It was Langford's Lenham that was in front at the flag, with Lackford's Frogeye third. Hartle failed to make the grid allowing Richard Homer an undisputed win in the Roadgoing category

Sibley, Actman and David Pymm set the fastest qualifying laps at Oulton Park in May. On this occasion after leading the race, Sibley's immaculate Group A example cried enough on the final lap resulting in a delighted Reeve taking victory. Langford and Actman enjoyed a race long dice, swapping



Ian Langford in the Lenham keeping ahead of a group led by Piers Townsend's 3.9 V8 MGB

places like no tomorrow, but Langford squeezed in front on the very last lap to take second overall and Group B by a scant two hundredths and be nominated driver of the race. Richard Bridge was third in Group B; whilst Pymm converted his pole to a Group C win.

June saw a double header at Lydden Hill in Kent (where your reporter had his first ever race). Paul Sibley and Nigel Pratt were the pole setters for race one and both went on to convert them into wins. Martin Morris and Ed Reeve were in close company for the second and third and indulged in some place swapping in the closing stages, with Martin holding on to take the place by just half a second. Nigel Pratt enjoyed a race long dice with the Group A car of Danny Rutta and went on to take Group B honours from Andrew Actman. It was more of the same in race two except that Richard Bridge took second in Group B and set the fastest lap as well!



The rapid Greame Adams keeps Russell McCarthy, Phil Walker and Spencer McCarthy in their full race MGB's at bay

MG Live at Silverstone saw 28 Midgets let loose on the new Grand Prix Circuit for the first time. Poles fell to Sibley, Actman and Pymm. Gil Duffy had forsaken his Group A car and was out in his Group B Frogeye as his other car was still undergoing repairs.

When the lights went out for the start, Actman's engine died on the line, but everyone managed to avoid him. The car was pushed away by the excellent marshals by the time that the cars came round to complete



Nigel Pratt being hounded by Ian Prior (MGB)

their first lap. Sibley was in front with David Weston up in second. Greame Adams and Martin Morris disputed third for the entire race, finally finishing in that order. Langford reigned supreme in Group B heading home Steve Collinson and Gil Duffy. Group C fell to David Pymm.

Next up was Thruxton: The Midgets have not raced here for a good 25 years. Sibley, Langford and Richard Homer were the pole men for race one. Sibley was never headed in Group A and once past Group B winner Langford, Greame Adams was a safe second, ahead of Reeve. Nigel Pratt was second in Group B followed by Dean Stanton, who nicked third from Ian Stagg; he later pitted to resolve a problem but rejoined to take the flag.



Ian Stagg trailing smoke towards the end, not a disaster though, just a loose oil breather



Eventual race winner, as he has been all year, Paul Sibley, in his immaculate class A machine

Race two saw the same results but was a more exciting race with Reeve and Morris having a right battle for third in Group A, Ed getting the verdict by 2½ seconds. Similarly third in Group B was fought out by Stanton and Steve Collinson who was eclipsed by 1½ seconds following a race long place swapping. The Hampshire venue is indeed a fast circuit with Sibley's best lap recorded at 97.26mph and Langford's Group B car circulating at an average speed of 92.82mph. Bet the designer of the A Series engine would never have believed it.

Next up was Donington Park, some drivers love it but when I raced it was my least favourite circuit. Sibley, Pratt and Nigel Parker took poles. Sibley led the race with Morris initially in second but Adams, who had a poor qualifying session had other ideas. He made a storming start from his lowly grid position and was up to second by lap 2, which earned him driver of the race. Morris hung on for third till his car cried enough and he retired on lap 5. Pratt was long gone in Group B, leaving Langford and Dean Stanton to battle it out for second. Battle it out they did swapping places every lap till Langford finally pulled out a margin on the ninth tour. Group C saw Pymm take victory over Homer.

The 750 Motor Club played host for our second visit to Oulton Park in September, where Sibley, Langford and Nigel Barker were the winners. The final outing of the season was a double header at the MGCC Snetterton season closer. Sibley took victory and the Steve Everitt Memorial Trophy in race 1, leading home fellow Group A men Weston and Reeve. Richard Perry took the honours in Group B from Stanton after Langford retired

on lap 5. Pymm took an easy Group C win from Homer.

The second race saw Group B drivers compete for the Krissy Duffy Trophy. Dean Stanton went home with the silverware whilst Sibley and Pymm were the other Group winners.

From the results, it would seem that the season was plain sailing for Sibley. However, many of the races were run with the BCV8 Championship cars. Paul, who happens to have a rapid V8 of his own, opted to drive the Midget to race against and often beat cars with nearly four litres under the bonnet. Well-done Paul.

I am sure present and past competitors would join me in thanking Championship Co-ordinator Larry Quinn and his wife Dorothy, for all their sterling work, at the



Krissy Duffy Trophy winner Dean Stanton in his Ashley Midget

The top scorers in each group

- A** 1: Paul Sibley 157, 2: Ed Reeve 80, 3: Greame Adams 48, 4: Martin Morris 46, 5: Danny Rutta 8.
- B** 1: Ian Langford 144, 2: Nigel Pratt 78, 3: Dean Stanton 77, 4: Andrew Actman 45, 5: Phil Attwood 44.
- C** 1: Richard Homer 86, 2: David Pymm 66, 3: Nigel Barker 20, 4: William Turner 8, 5: Peter Hartle 1.

“Steve Everitt Trophy”: Paul Sibley. “Krissy Duffy Trophy”: Dean Stanton.

Congratulations to our three champions.



Ian Stagg leading Mike Harris (MGB), and Dean Stanton (Lenham Midget)

circuits and behind the scenes, on our behalf over the last 35 years. Having founded and run it for this long period, Larry has decided now is the time for him to step down. A committee of drivers: Ted Reeve, Gil Duffy and Nigel Pratt, will oversee the championship. Tim Storrar, who previously raced in the series for many years, is set to take over the role of co-ordinator. The Sprite drivers from the Austin Healey Championship will be joining us in 2012 for what will now be known as the Lackford Engineering Midget



Steve Collinson displaying plenty of oversteer



Martin Morris fourth overall in class A

& Sprite Challenge and the class structure will be amended to integrate the Healey spec cars.

The provisional calendar for the 2012 season is as follows: 8 April Donington Park, 5/6 May Brands Hatch, 23/24 June Silverstone, 11 August Oulton Park, 9 September Thruxton, 13/14 October Snetterton. Drivers considering competing in the series can get more information and receive a copy of the regulations by having a chat with Gil Duffy 01886 880 882.

**Words John Baggott
Images Dennis Wharf**

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MIDGET 50 the final countdown

On the 25th November representatives of the Midget 50 organising committee made a presentation to the East Anglia Air Ambulance Organisation in Cambridge. The committee were pleased to hand over a cheque for **£6,681.32** to the Air Ambulance representative.

So although sadly, the day was hit by rainy weather we can all be very proud of the results we achieved in June.

On behalf of the organising committee I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for joining us at Burghley House and helping us achieve this magnificent total for this vital cause.

As with Spridget 50, MASC were very well represented in the committee and we are proud to have shared the task together.

Bill Mohan



My Old and New Spridgets

Following the requests for pictures and stories about our old and new Spridgets, I thought I'd send in my contribution.

In 1966, aged 26, I bought a new Mark 2 MG Midget old English White, registration DCN 300D. I don't know if the car is still around but it would be easily recognisable because I set two spotlights flush into the grill.

I used the car daily, taking me to work and back and it never let me down. I owned it for eight years and it was still in excellent condition when I sold it.

Over the years I have had various cars but always promised myself that I would have another Spridget so when I saw my new Trojan Sprite for sale in 2000, with less than 700 miles on the clock I knew I had to have it.

What is a Trojan Sprite? Well, this car was registered in 2000 X1AHS, built by Adam Bevan of the Healey Sprite Motor Company, Maidenhead, Berkshire. It has a Ford 5 speed gear box, disc brakes on the front, 1275 engine, Old English White with red interior and fully adjustable spax shock absorbers with coil springs all round, with alloy wheels. The battery and the washer bottle are in the boot, which makes the engine compartment look really tidy.

I have a letter addressed to Adam Bevan from Brian Healey wishing all the success in building these cars and it has all the correct Austin Healey badges, but to get round the technicality it is registered as a Trojan Healey. Sadly the company is no longer in business but I believe mine is the only road car ever built. I have heard however that Adam may have built another red one specifically for track



racing with a 1500 diesel engine but I can't confirm this.

I have taken the Trojan Healey to different car shows and it has been admired by many. The highlight however was being awarded Concours Class Winner at the Big Party, Gaydon celebrating Spridget 50 on 24th May 2008.

Tom Tulip 3806A
Lindfield, West Sussex

KSU 185 Austin Healey Sprite Mk 1

Who are you?



Smokeless in Melbourne

She deserved a special gift. In 1972 I bought my now wife her first car – an Austin Healey Mark 1 Sprite. It cost \$180 without a roadworthy certificate but with a fastback (probably installed in a backyard). It was cheap for a 12 year old out-of-fashion sports car. It sounds even better value now. I thought we loved that car. But I can't find a single photo.

Our first home didn't have a garage – the Sprite lived on the driveway. In the early eighties, a house upgrade meant it was time for the Sprite to be “monetized”.

We placed an ad in the Saturday Classifieds for six times our purchase price. We had a buyer late on Friday night. By Saturday dawn the Sprite was gone. The next thirty years were Spriteless.

My brother-in-law who races Porsches gave my grandson and I pit passes for the 2011 Australian Grand Prix. One of the sights on offer was a display of classic and vintage sports cars. I don't remember if there were any Sprites. However the images of fifties classics started me thinking about again owning a Bugeye. I wondered what they were worth.

What I had in mind was what I remembered from my original Sprite experience – something that was still rooted in the fifties. I wasn't interested in Sprites with any attempts at modernity over the past half century. The local car sales websites had little to offer – either very expensive restorations or updated street racers that had lost the fiftiesness.

Then I remembered the soaring Australian dollar. US and UK car prices had never been so attractive. Probably incorrectly, I dismissed the US left hand drive conversions as too difficult. I then looked to the UK where there was a wide selection of “Frogeyes” on the classic car sales websites. After eliminating the high value “restored to new” and project cars (euphemism for wreck), there were still a selection worth considering. I tried unsuccessfully to engage the local Sprite Club to give me an appraisal of my choice. However that didn't work out. So I was left with a character assessment of the seller over the phone and email, the answers to my questions and high resolution photos to choose my Bugeye.

The Sprite that I took a liking to was in Hampshire, in the south of England. It looked



Rear view with wheel arch rust

great in the low quality photos on the website. It had a new clutch and a head conversion to unleaded fuel. From the website photos I could see wire wheels and a shiny Old English White body with a red interior. There was a front bumper and luggage rack.

My email and phone conversations with the seller revealed a 10 year old repaint with only 3000 miles in 10 years. The subsequent high resolution photos showed some surface rust around the wheel arches and underneath the body. The seller was forthcoming with what he saw as the car's drawbacks – non standard motor, rust underneath and wire wheels that used stud adapters. The owner wrongly thought the car had a 1100cc motor (it was a 1275). The car came with a tonneau, soft-top and hardtop.

I checked the owner out on the social networking site LinkedIn. On the next phone call, I learned there was a folder of receipts and other vehicle history documents.



1275 casting mark

I bought the Sprite subject to the seller delivering the car to Southampton docks. In return I was to give him full pub bragging rights about his Australian internet sale.

Shipping the car from the UK was straightforward. After transferring the funds to the seller's bank using an internet foreign exchange dealer, he drove the car to Southampton roll-on roll-off car shipping terminal. The UK shipping agent needed proof of ownership. I had to be, in UK Ministry of Transport terms, "the keeper". Driving the car onto the ship was a lot cheaper than shipping

using a container. Ships aren't fast. However you can track their movement on the internet around the world port by port, continent by continent as part of the experience.

In theory it's important to have an Australian government Import Certificate before the car sets sail. In practice there is plenty of time while the car is on the water. There are many more steps. This is the easiest link in a long chain of processes.

1960 Bugeyed Sprites are duty free. Australian Customs has forms with secret codes only known to the initiated, expected government fees and GST (goods and services tax). Six weeks after leaving England the Sprite arrived in Melbourne. The wheels of government started to turn and then stopped. The Customs examiner detected a date on the British MOT documentation "from 1988 the car had had seven keepers". There is duty to pay on a 1988 vehicle. Once manufacture in 1960 (and not 1988) was confirmed, Customs was cleared.

The next hurdle was the Australian Quarantine Service. A few blades of potentially diseased English grass on the carpet – fail. Off to a quarantine accredited vacuum cleaner. Re-inspection – pass.

The drive home from industrial Spotswood sharing the road with double-B semi trailers was terrifying. Fortunately, Kermit (the previous "keeper's" name for the Sprite) was in fact Smokin' Kermit with the enhanced visibility that comes with exhaust smoke under acceleration. Home safe.

The accompanying folder of receipts read well. Major replacements over the past ten years – reconditioned gear box, front shock



Bendless exhaust!

absorbers, starter motor, master cylinder, seat belts and lots more. I can understand why 300 miles per year didn't make the annual MOT worth the effort for the previous owner.

While the car was at sea, I had a chance to Google Earth the Sprite's previous home garage which it turns out was only a few metres from the English Channel. While sea air might be good for health, it's not good for rust prevention.

Before attempting to get the car registered there were some obvious repairs. The 1990 tyres were well past their use-by date even though they weren't that worn.

The smoking motor required repair. This was part of the fun of owning a Sprite – pulling out the motor, stripping it down, getting it rebored and then reassembling.

Up until a year ago, the maintenance was performed by that British institution, the reliable village mechanic, with good results – a constant stream of component replacements and annual MOT passes. Then a change of village mechanic and a series of ill-judged shortcuts – exhaust systems that



Rusty Hose Connection

didn't fit; changing a clutch and head while ignoring oil burning pistons left the Sprite with a precarious future.

The State of Victoria's roadworthy certificates have become much more onerous in recent times. The surface underneath rust is required to be treated by an authorised body repairer. He claimed the rust was treated just in the nick of time. There were also structural patches where the rust was more than just surface cosmetics. Similarly the mechanical aspects of a roadworthy inspection are no longer a walk in the park.

I'd already replaced the rear brake shoes. The roadworthy required new front brakes, steering rack repairs and differential oil seal.

With roadworthy certificate and club permit documentation in hand, it was on to one of the easiest steps in the process, visiting VicRoads and walking out with my Club Permit Plates and 90 days a year log book.

Two more small tasks remained. The Sprite came with an original Radiomobile valve radio. Somewhere in the car's 51 year history the original positive earth electrical system had been changed to the more conventional negative earth. Everything except the radio made the transition. I purchased the radio's circuit diagram from a Cornwell retiree over the internet. I fixed the valve radio, converted the polarity and added an iPod input.

The remaining task was the disappointment of the battery regularly going flat. The battery and generator were ok. The electromechanical regulator has probably been operating for 51 years without a good contact clean. Once serviced, the regulator functioned well. No known problems!

From July 1988 my Sprite has had seven owners. From the time of its manufacture in 1960, I wonder how many others have shared my joy of ownership? The Sprite left the factory painted Nevada Beige. It is now Old English White. There are signs of red paint on the rocker panels. British registration was KSU 185 with chassis number AN5/48258. The 1275cc engine has no number. KSU 185 who are you?

Stephen Rose

Keeper of AN5/48258 (nee KSU 185)

(December 2011)

rose@rosetechnology.com.au

+61 418331564

East Anglian Report

It has not really been good Spridget weather of late in fact 2011 was not really Spridget friendly weather wise at all so it was no surprise that no correct cars turned up at the monthly FBI meeting. I did go in my MG (badged as a Rover) and Chris turned up in a proper Mini but that was about as close as it got, however in our defence it was a misty moisty and very cold night. I turned up a bit late, was late getting away from work, and anyway I didn't expect a huge turn out on such a night so close to the weekend Christmas meal. I was however pleasantly surprised at the turn out and as it happens some people had incorrect information on the meeting place and time for the Sunday meal, so I was able to clarify those details (i.e. meet at Peterborough services just off the A1M at 11-50 and look out for a red topless Sprite which will lead you to the venue, sunshine has been booked so come in a proper car if at all possible). We also touched on subjects including 5-speed conversions and page three of *MASCOT*.

Derek announced that he had bought a new proper Sprite that he could use on our various runs and events. There has been some



discussion at times about what constitutes a proper car for a MASC member, and if modern replicas and kit cars should really be included, my view has always been that they should, and anyone interested in these great little cars in all their forms and derivatives should be welcome. I think everyone has their own way of enjoying their classic, some tinker and modify, some make them go fast, some make them pristine and original and some like me use and abuse them and love to see examples from people of every viewpoint including V8s and replica cars.

Next up was the Christmas meal and right on the dot that red topless Sprite appeared, did a couple of circuits of the services car park looking for Spridgets and came up empty, just a scrum of over coated people standing in front of a line of grey and black euro boxes, the only exception being Nigel in his bright yellow Citron (clearly the most appropriate

colour). We set off for our venue by a carefully contrived route designed to avoid obstacles that might break up our convoy and almost entirely on dual carriageways so we could pootle along the slow lane to wait for stragglers to catch up without holding anyone up, and taking in a nice view of the cathedral and the chance to cross my favourite bridge. Not sure what we would have done without Nigel's yellow marker since everyone else just blended in to the traffic (not like a proper line of Sprite) Pat struggled to keep tabs on everyone however my careful





Victorian ceilings and the cold day meant that the room took a while to warm up, but the jovial good natured company and a couple of glasses of red soon thawed us out and I think a good time was had by all.

See you all at the Ferry Boat and beyond.

Dave Dixon



planning paid off since we all arrived safely at the stunning venue.

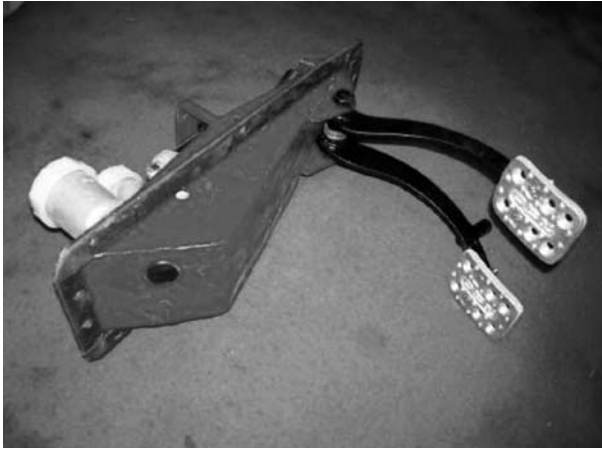
The building is the gatehouse from a Victorian prison and is a little architectural gem in the style of a Norman castle which everyone found pleasing and interesting, the food was excellent, plentiful and good value, the seating good with us all at the same table and in a side room more or less just for MASC. The only downside was the incredibly high

Sebring Sprite Replica

I purchased the tub off of Dave Parker in August 2010, but did not get it into the workshop until Christmas. Dave had purchased the bodyshell (a '59 Frog) after much of the rust had been cut out and repaired which included converting the rear floor pans to take semi-elliptical springs and then set about having the fibreglass back and roof and aluminium doors fitted as the basis for his Sebring Sprite Replica. I purchased it in this state from Dave and set about completing it.



Much of my early work included just tidying up the bodyshell, completing a few bits of rot that had not been completed and tidying up the fixing of the fibreglass panels to the



up-rated shocks; telescopic rears, competition bushes, anti-roll bar, harder pads and shoes, and I have fabricated a replica 'Sebring' pedal box. The engine will only be mildly tuned at this stage.

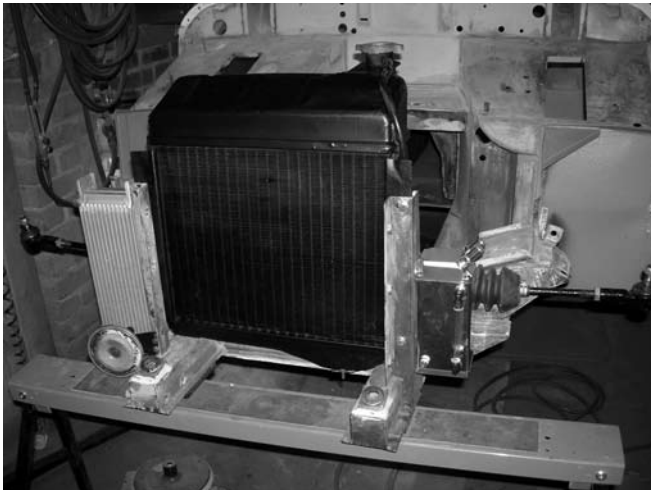
Progress to date has been good; most parts to be re-used have been refurbished and trial fitted and the bodyshell is now virtually ready for paint; the underside of the floor painted and last week the inside was painted.

The biggest job to date has been fitting the full roll cage; a

tub before getting it ready for paint. The car will be finished in Speedwell blue.

It is my intention to sprint and hill climb the car when it is complete in the Healey Championship and a lot of work to date has had that in mind – modifying and fitting a full roll cage, plating the chassis for an anti-roll bar, modifying the electric for competition, etc, etc.

A buddy of mine supplied all the running gear from a Mk3 Midget which he has discarded in building his track Midget with a Ford drive train. The suspension and brakes will be uprated – harder springs,



standard Midget cage just does not fit and needed to be cut and bent and tweaked to fit, but I am relieved to say that it now fits and is being prepped for paint.

The engine will be rebuilt over the winter and fingers crossed, I will be on the road with it next year.

Steve Casson

Radiator, oil cooler and catch tank

Problem Solving Flowchart

Following on from “The Only Maintenance Manual That Your Spridget Should Ever Need” which was printed on page 16 of the December issue of *MASCOT*.

The Midget & Sprite Club are proud to further enhance your life with this “Problem Solving Flowchart”.

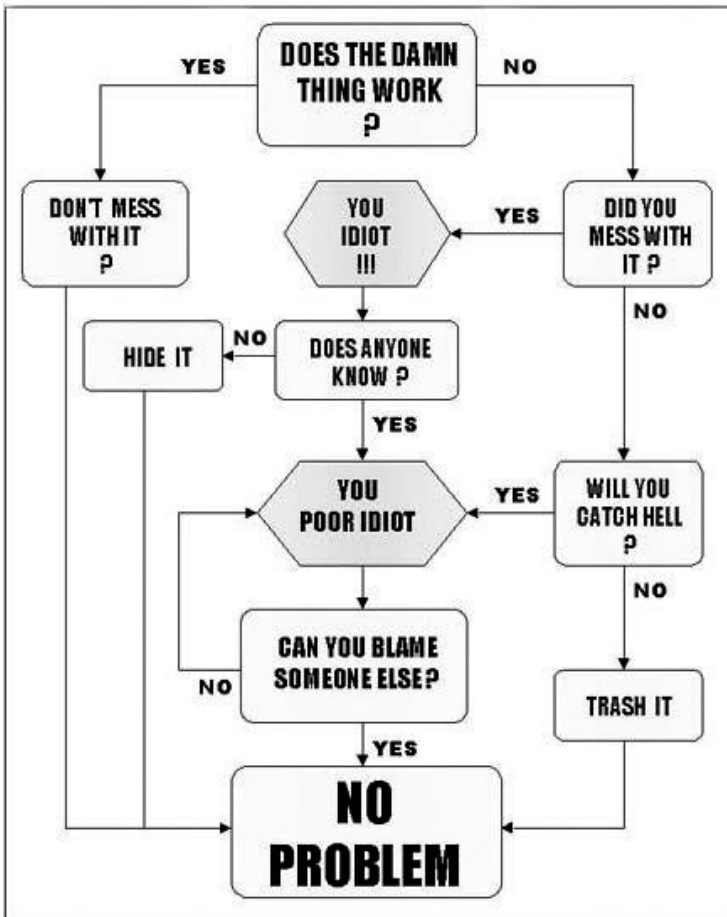
Equally useful in the home, garage, workplace or school. This flowchart should resolve any situation. It may even replace expensive visits to Marriage guidance counsellors.

Simply scan, print and stick it on your wall (where no one else can actually see it) and then relax in the full knowledge that any problem, however great, will be no longer be an issue, or if it is, then it's not your fault.

For domestic situations, we strongly recommend memorising the “Problem Solving Flowchart”.

The Midget & Sprite Club can accept no responsibility for any injuries, court cases, divorces or criminal cases arising from the use of this flowchart.

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Scotland Area Report

By the time you read this Christmas and New Year will have passed. I hope Santa was able to make his way down the chimney with his sack full of all those Spridgety bits you asked him for! Seriously, I hope you all had a good Christmas and are looking forward to a happy and successful 2012.

Ten members of the Scottish Group attended Fratelli's Restaurant in Coatbridge on Sunday 11th December. This was a new venue for us, and as I was the organiser, I approached the day with a certain amount of trepidation. I need not have worried however. We were served an excellent meal by very courteous and attentive staff and all the group agreed it had been a very pleasant experience.

As we are now well into winter, the in-car activities are now completely ceased, however it would appear that every member has a project that he is intending to get completed over the off-season. After some setbacks Dave A is now hoping to get work started again on his rebuild of the imported Spridget shell with the intention of getting it back on the road for this season. Michael is now pretty well advanced on his restoration project with the next major task being the re-upholstering and recovering of the seats and then the completing of the rest of the interior work. Willie is getting welding repairs done to the inner wings of his car and Steve is going to rebuild the front suspension and brakes

of his. I presently have the driver's seat out of my car prior to re-upholstering and recovering both seats. David L, who bought Carson's car, is promising not to touch it but in a moments weakness at the Christmas lunch did threaten that he might polish it. Time will tell!

We have now got a number of offers from the group members who are willing to organise runs for next year and to date these include: Ricky to do a run to Kippford in Dumfries, David L a run into Ayrshire, Willie a tour of the Trossachs, Steve is taking us into Fife and I have suggested a run to Loch Tay and Perthshire. We still have a couple of the group to forward their proposals and then hopefully we can pull them all together into a programme for next year.

In the meantime, may I re-iterate comments I have made previously? I would be delighted if members of MASC in Scotland would make contact with me to try and establish if there is a way in which we could possibly organise runs that may come into your areas in order that we may meet up and enjoy at least part of the run in each other's company. Also any members of MASC that may be coming to Scotland on a visit again make contact in order that we can try and meet.

John Pardo

Contact: 01698 814791

E-mail: jp1kg@talktalk.net

Bristol Area Report

(The Witches of Sellen)

And so into a new year. Which reminds me, the most ancient of MASC branches has been meeting at Pucklechurch since the last century. A fact now recognised by the Parish Council who now regard us as a part of the village establishment. In celebration of this, they presented us with the key to the 16 century Stocks on the village green, ours to use exclusively on the second Wednesday of each month. Seems as though the Women's institute have it on Mondays, the Scouts on Tuesdays, Guides on Thursdays, the Legion on Fridays and the young farmers of Saturday. Sunday usage is reserved for more formal ceremonies as opposed to the more recreational pursuits on other days. Along with this formal recognition of MASC (Bristol) in supporting the village economy, we were invited to the annual burning of the Christmas Tree which happened to coincide with our December meeting. The whole village turns out for this, including the fire brigade, the police and ambulance services, all of whom know us rather well by now! Health and safety officials ensure the lights are disconnected, barriers erected and the fairy at the top of the tree isn't a real one (apparently it was in 2004 and the paperwork kept the parish council busy until August). Goodness knows, if any parish had a glut of fairies, then Pucklechurch has – or so I'm told. Any way, now that we are a part of the village establishment, we have been placed on the list to have use of the village Ducking stool down by the river. Evidently, we have to attend a training course and obtain a certificate of competency before performing three observed 'duckings' to gain our full scroll of ancient ducking rights. We have to find our own witches as all of the Pucklechurch witches are fully booked for the coming year it seems. With this new found status, the Landlord of the R & C has re-instated our freedom to use the toilets, albeit only one member at a time and accompanied by a member of staff.

Which (different sort now) brings me onto 2012. We have had 50 years of both Sprite and Midget done and dusted, so what can we celebrate in 2012? The coming of disc front brakes, 1098cc engine, ribbed case gearbox



Terry introduces the new Bristol area name to the other members

– yeah – should not be let passed un-noticed. Check out what happened in Spridget folklore during 1963, really nothing worth celebrating in 2013 so let's make the most of 2012 then.

Our December gathering unanimously applauded the clever re-branding of the club's Midland branches under the heading 'Heart of England' MASC. We once posed as 'CUBA' (Counties that used to be Avon) but that is now long forgotten by most. So, following the lead of our imaginative Midlanders. Sticking to the theme of parts of the anatomy and our southerly disposition, we are pleased to announce that from February the 21st, we re-brand as the 'Bowels of Bristol'. Should any members have any other suggestions, then please table your motion at the January club night.

Also for January, our General Secretary, Philip Sellen will be rolling out the proposed Bowels of Bristol table allocation matrix. The Traditional Good & Naughty tables will be augmented by further increments of waywardness and a clear structure of how these will be implemented. The only drawback, the Rose & Crown may not have enough tables should each member attending be in a classification of their own. Hence, our 'Meeting attendance Request' forms will now control the numbers to a sensible, manageable level. (The rumour that there will be an 'Alan Lo' table with just one seat – might be true).

Terry Horler
(Definitely on my own table)

Hampshire Happenings

Bowled Over

When John (our events man) noticed in the MG Owners Club Magazine that their Winchester group occasionally play skittles at the Cart & Horses in Kingsworthy he decided to contact them and see if they would like to join up for a contest. As a result eight intrepid skittlers from Hampshire joined them for their October meeting and skittle night.

We were just 'pipped at the post' in the team event, losing by just four points with a score of 130 to 126 however the prize of a large tin of sweets was generously shared between everyone and quickly devoured.

The second round was an individual 'last man standing' event which again was won by a Winchester player although Mike did get the highest individual score. The job of returning balls and setting up the skittles was a good aerobic workout and shared between the more energetic members from both teams.

We had such a good time that Harriet is organising a similar event with the Morris Minor Club on the 12th January. (See below)

Windscreen Vinyls

We ran out of our stock of windscreen vinyls advertising the Hampshire Chapter website earlier this year, but due to popular demand we have ordered another supply and these will be available at the monthly meetings from December.

They will cost just £1.50 each, will have white lettering and can be supplied to fix to the inside or outside of your windscreen (ideal for modern cars that have an anti-glare strip along the top).

If you can't make it to the meetings but would like a 'banner' please contact Barry on: barry@midgetandsprite-hampshire.info

Forthcoming Events (John's Bit)

events@midgetandsprite-hampshire.info

January

Thursday 12th
Skittles with Morris Minor Owners Club

Sunday 22nd
12.30 Quiz and Lunch in Bracknell

Thursday 26th
Monthly Meeting at the Fox and Goose

February

Sunday 19th
Treasure Hunt starting from the Fox and Goose

Thursday 23rd
Monthly Meeting at the Fox and Goose

March

TBA – Cobweb Spin – IBM Hursley Park

Sunday 11th
Trip to Gosport & Ferry to Gunwharf Quay for Lunch/Shopping/Spinnaker Tower

Thursday 22nd
Monthly Meeting at the Fox and Goose

April

Tuesday 3rd
Classics at The Emporium, Fleet (food available)

Monday 9th
Picket Piece

Thursday 26th
Monthly Meeting at the Fox and Goose

The full list of events is now available in PDF format on the website, if you need further info please contact John who should be able to 'fill you in'.

Please Note:

The date of the Hampshire Open Day has been moved to Sunday 9th September.

If you have any contributions for the website or photos from the events please forward them to Barry:
info@midgetandsprite-hampshire.info

Please note that the main email address for the Hampshire area is now:
friendlyfolk@midgetandsprite-hampshire.info

Kent Area Meet



Ron & Marilyn Edwards in their newly rebuilt Sprite

The weather was being good for our last meeting of the year. We traditionally do not meet in December for other than our Christmas meal. Several people came without their Spridgets as they have begun, or are beginning, winter rebuilds.

Ron & Marilyn Edwards used the good weather as an excuse to give their rebuild fresh Frogeye its longest shakedown to date. This car, which sat proudly gleaming in the sunlight, has many interesting period features from Alexander Engineering the most obvious of which are twin Stromberg Carburettors which sit upon a nicely ribbed Alexander inlet manifold. Hopefully Ron can be persuaded to write about this build and the various parts that he discovered since purchase.

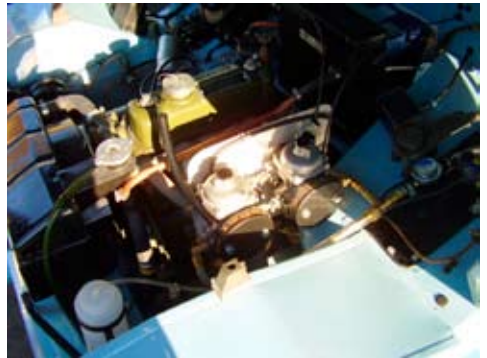
Ron has put forward a gem of a suggestion that concerns the fitment of HIF S.U.s. The idea has been successfully tried and tested on Ron's other later mark Sprite. Many now seem keen to fit a later HIF type single carb' to a Sprite, either as a performance modification or to do away with the need for balancing, and adjusting, twin carbs. A problem arises with clearance, or lack of it, between the carb' dashpot and the bonnet unless a rare Titan manifold can be found. Ron has discovered and used a piston and damper made for the SU but for fitment on a Harley Davidson motorcycle. The dashpot has a part number of LZX1062 but it is not known whether or not this includes the piston.

Contact Burlen for more info and price. A manifold suitable for a mini can then be used instead.

Two new members made maiden visits to our group. Stephen Ford brought along his friend Tony to discuss a five speed conversion. Stephen is planning to marry Claire next year when members are away on tour. Apparently the whole family has been bitten by the Spridget bug with his father asking to use the Spridget and do the tour in his stead. Bring it on!

Father and son, duo, Ben & Dan Collins came sans car but are looking to trailer their car to the January meet to canvas advice on the way forward. The Frogeye (675BYC) has been shut away for twenty one years, under a tarpaulin, and will need some serious re commissioning. They are keen to know if anyone has, or knows how to, fit an automatic gearbox into a Frogeye? E-mails can be forwarded.

It is now time to look forward to next year. Darren Tyre is planning the annual London



Strombergs by Alexander Engineering

Neville & Pam Plummer in their IOW Frogeye



Bridges run on Monday 2nd January. This run starts just south of London Bridge and entrants drive across the London Bridges to Richmond where warm shelter and a pub lunch herald the end of the run. More details can be found posted on the MG Enthusiasts BBS. Whilst talking about computers have you seen the MASC website lately? It seems to improve in leaps & bounds.

There is a Loire Valley / Le Mans Classic tour planned for next year 30th June – 14th July taking in the Bressierre GP Historique. With luck the advert should have appeared in the last edition of MASCOT but if not and you are interested, in the tour or accommodation just for the Classic, places are limited so give me a call.

Finally Mel & Barb Collins cemented their claim on a bottle, to be presented at the Christmas meal, for the most attendances at a monthly meet, in a Spridget. From a potential number of ten, there was no meet in June, they have brought their de-rubber bumpered 1500 Midget eight times. In



Ralph Whitmarsh in his Mk1 Sprite

second place trailed Paul & Jane, Ron & Marilyn, and Ralph Whitmarsh. For all the other Kent members, as my teacher often wrote upon my school reports, "could do better". However that said it is better to see you all without a Spridget than not see you at all!

Alan Anstead

Heart of England Report

The December issue included the report from our last meeting and this report is due before our next meeting so little worth noting has happened in the interim. December's meeting on the 14th will be our Christmas Dinner which 28 people have signed up for. Hopefully the ingredients are there for an enjoyable evening – good food and good company, what more do we need?



A reminder of a previous Heart of England area trip to the Treffen in Germany

It is hoped that members will turn out in force to the January meeting (**N.B. the earlier start time of 8.00**) armed with ideas for the coming year and what events they wish to have included in our calendar – hopefully there will be some fresh ones to add to our regular dates.

2011 has been another active and varied year for Heart of England area. We have enjoyed travelling in our cars as far afield as Germany, France and Wales as well as attending a variety of other events, such as Silverstone, Fly to the Past and the Pershore Plum Fair and more local runs in the surrounding counties of our area organised by members. Meetings have been very well attended, sometimes as many as 48 people have packed into the Green Dragon, and it is always good to have many old and new members visit a Club Night. Let's hope that 2012 is another full and fun-packed year and the area continues to go from strength to strength.

Rosemary Couch
roalan@talktalk.net

Get it in your diary

Donington Historic Festival 2012

The dates of the second Donington Historic Festival have been confirmed as Saturday May 5th and Sunday May 6th 2012 – a weekend that definitely deserves priority placement in your diary.

The inaugural event in 2011 was a tremendous success, attracting 12,000 people who basked in the Donington sunshine for two days of action-packed historic racing with 300+ cars out on track. While the organisers can't guarantee the same idyllic weather, the 2012 Festival is guaranteed to deliver an equally thrilling array of huge grids of the cream of Europe's historic single-seaters, sportscars and touring cars, all battling it out around this hugely popular and exciting circuit in the hands of some of the top drivers in the sport.

The Midget & Sprite Club has already registered for the event and as with the Silverstone Classic, we intend to have a large club gathering in our own specific club area, close to the action.

The advert opposite contains the discount code for tickets, which have been improved by the additional choice of allowing us to select one day tickets instead of the whole weekend.

Last year the drive around the track at speed was worth the entry fee alone!

Great racing, excellent views of the track, an informal pit area and perhaps as it's a young event it will be less commercially orientated than other Historic Festivals

A superb location and attractions on site such as the Donington Grand Prix Collection museum.

For further information please visit www.doningtonhistoric.com or contact Alan East-Jones at apfastsol@gmail.com who has volunteered to be the contact for MASC members wishing to attend.

Quote ref. **MSCDHF12** when booking
by phone or through the website.

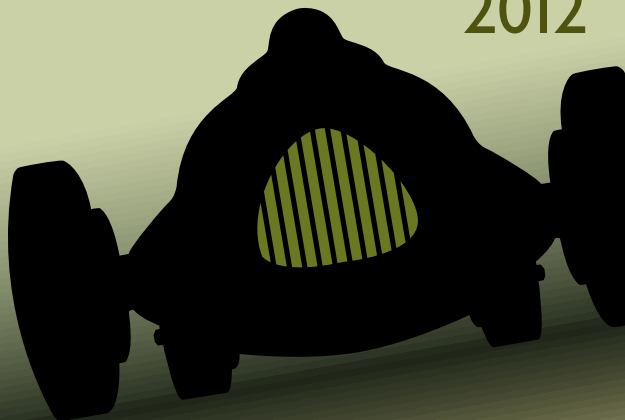
24hr ticket hotline:
0844 873 7355 or
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SATURDAY 5th MAY &
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2012

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- HSCC Historic F2
- '1000km' for pre-72 sports-racing cars
- U2TC, Pre-66 under two-litre Touring Cars
- E-type Challenge
- Pre-63 GT
- Stirling Moss Trophy for pre-61 sportscars
- RAC Woodcote Trophy for pre-56 sportscars
- 'Mad Jack' for pre-War sportscars

Special Midget & Sprite Club member offer:

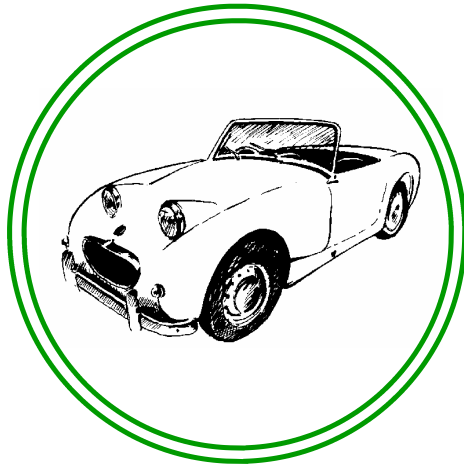
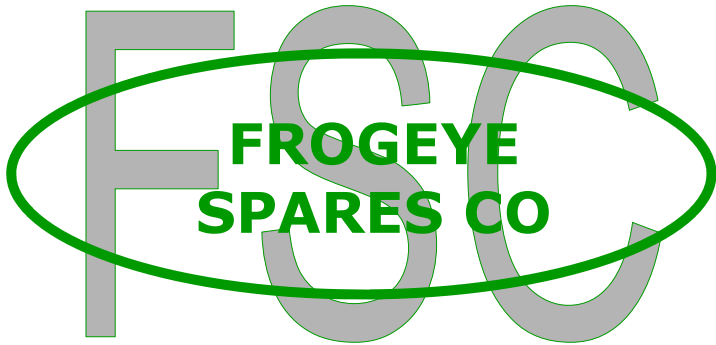
We have put together a special package for members of the Midget & Sprite Club, to give you discounted tickets plus dedicated members' parking and club display areas. Buy one advance one-day ticket for £18, or one advance two-day ticket for £30, and get another FREE! Children under 16 also go free. **QUOTE REF. MSCDHF12** when booking by phone or through our website.

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