

Keith Cosgrove's Racing Minor

Back in 1991, a Morris Minor MM Low-Light was bought for \$200 with the intention of restoring it and getting it back on the road. After a quarter of a century it did eventually get back on the 'road', just not in the way most would think of.



Not a pretty sight in 1991...

Keith Cosgrove and son James are responsible for the immaculate racing car you see here. It was not as expensive as you might think: but it included a *lot* of wheeling and dealing to keep costs down. Keith and James were in the right place at the right time to get the engine cheap and there was a lot of DIY along the way. The time and effort that went into building such a

precision race car would be impossible to calculate.

The car remained just another old neglected vehicle for a long time (it had been off the road since the early 1970's) with not much being done, even after Keith's purchase. Scraping paint back and fixing some rust (like replacing the floor) were the limit for about the first dozen years.

The cost of making the car roadworthy, with all the engineering formalities required by law, was just too high. "Let's do something interesting to it" was the suggestion that had Keith and James excited about finishing the job. Thus began the transformation of a humble Morris Minor MM into a unique sports sedan.

Keith had raced sports sedans



Soundproofing? Just add paint.



years ago in the 1980's: Oran Park, Amaroo Park, etc, piloting a Datsun 1200 Coupe with a 13B rotary engine. So "Let's do something interesting to it" became "Let's turn it into a sports sedan!" That, as you can imagine, is where the fun started.

Basically, the car was built around a Toyota 4A-GE, 1.6 litre, 16 valve Toyota Sprinter engine, tuned to run on 98 octane petrol. It has forged

pistons, ground cams and custom-made individual throttle bodies ("The fuel injection version of twin Webers" James enthusiastically added), all hand fabricated by Keith. Power? I'm glad you asked. How does nearly 120 horsepower (89 kW) at the wheels sound? Check it out on YouTube; just type in *Morris Minor 4A-GE*. A Toyota Sprinter gearbox handles the power.

The ceramic-coated extractors were made at home by Keith and James, matched to a straight-through muffler and side pipes that exit under the passenger door. It runs a 4.55 ratio RX3 diff. Suspension is via telescopic Koni Special D adjustable dampers at the front and



"With a little help from my friends"



standard Mini ones at the rear (to keep the rear 'soft'), neoprene bushes all round and a K-mac anti-roll bar. Ray Selby worked his magic on the leaf springs.

James did a lot of the bodywork, most of it hand beaten into shape. Its Keith's car and Keith likes blue, especially Ford's XR6 blue, so in the backyard in 2013, that's the colour it was sprayed. It has a half roll cage, a single fibreglass racing seat and 4-point harness. The gauges are all AutoMeter – amps, water, oil and a tacho for the 8500rpm red line. No speedo, though... The car has

been calculated at 200 km/h down the main straight at Eastern Creek!

If you want to go fast, good brakes are only going to slow you down, right? Even so, brakes are great with front discs from Nissan Pulsar SSS with a Stanza booster. A mate from Speedy Wheels helped to get the right wheels and another mate (lots of 'mates' in this rebuild) helped obtain a Haltech on-board computer. 205x50x15 Federal race tyres provide plenty of grip.





What a donk!

Those who went to 'Minors Under The Dish' at Parkes in 2016 witnessed the car's first public outing – and what an absolutely astonishing sight it was, simply stunning! All it needed from there was some fine tuning, a bit of finishing off and a wheel alignment.

Feb 2017: Wakefield Park Raceway, Goulburn, the scene of the car's first run...



One for the family album!



Keith Cosgrove with his pride and joy

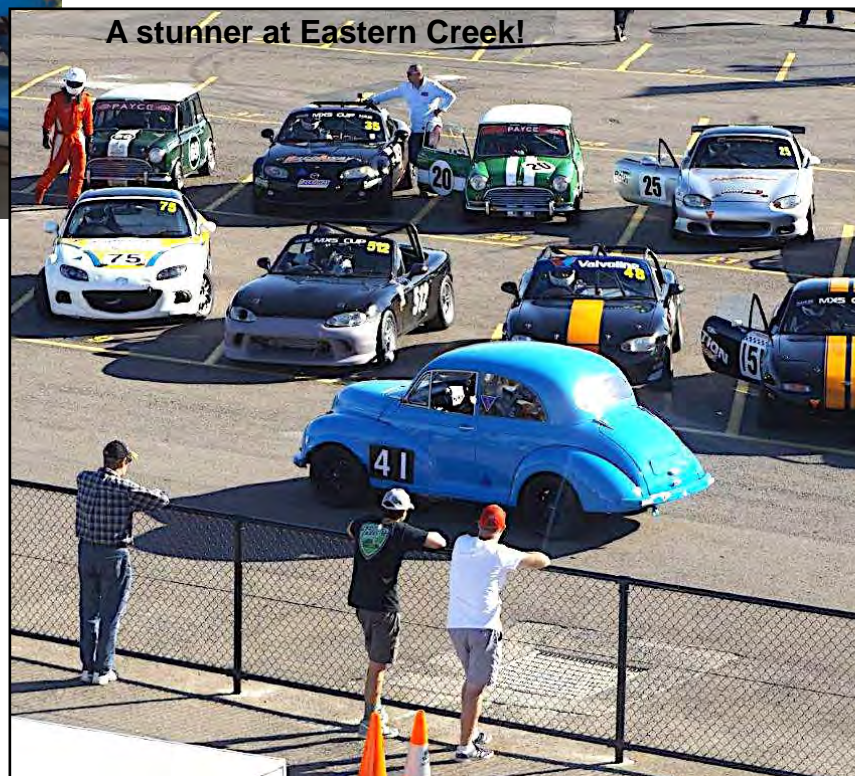
racing Minor? According to James: “Keith loves it! It’s his pride and joy; great seeing something different out on the track in a car we built from scratch.”

Story and photos: James Cosgrove

“It’s awesome! It was the craziest day of our lives!” admitted James. “It ran all day, no niggles, nothing broke, all brilliant.” Not too many of us could be that positive after the first run of a project car.

Keith has competed in the FoSC race series (Festival of Sports Cars), with two races to date at Wakefield, one at Marulan, two at Eastern Creek... and even allowing James a drive at Luddenham.

So, what does Keith think of his



A stunner at Eastern Creek!