

NEWSLETTER

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www.schvc.com.au



Rev Your Social Engine - Join Us This May!

New Faces Welcome – Old Friends Too!

We have some great events planned for May with our Biggest Morning Tea Cancer Council Fundraiser on Thursday 8th of May, our Heritage Day Drive to Mallacoota for lunch on Sunday 18th of May & don't forget our Classics & Coffee every Thursday at a local cafe. Bring your partner and meet other member friends in a social outing.

Join the Fun – Events, Coffee & Classics Await!

Also, next Tuesday 6th from 9.30am & Wed 7th from 1.30pm we have bus groups visiting the club for a tour of our facilities and vehicles on display.

Tagalong for a free guided tour & hear about the history of some of the 50+ vehicles we have on display.

We Don't Bite – We Drive Classics!

Save the Date: Thursday 8th May 10.00am to 2.00pm - Classic & Coffee Run

Location: Pam & Craigs house, 401 Candelo Wolumla Rd Wolumla. 2550



Join us at our Biggest Morning Tea fundraiser for the Cancer Council

Anzac Day

Thanks to our members Fred Silk, Alex McQueen, Tony Stove and Bob Coady for representing the SCHVC at the Eden, Pambula and Merimbula ceremonies.

Cars that upset the establishment

Every now and then a car comes along that turns established thinking on its head.

Whether it's new technology, doing the job better, or offering an improved car for less money, all of the cars on our list have been giant killers in their time.

Not all went on to sell in droves, but they did change their segments of the motoring market for the better.

1923 Austin Seven

When the choice for many was a motorcycle or trying to afford a much more expensive car, the Austin Seven arrived to offer a practical option at a reasonable cost.

Unlike basic cyclecars that Austin dealt a fatal blow to, the Seven had four seats and was capable of being used on longer trips in decent comfort.

While the little Austin didn't sell in the same quantity as Ford's Model T, the Seven spurred rival car makers into building similarly low-cost models to deliver motoring to the masses.

It also proved to be a vital financial lifeline to Austin and shifted the company's focus more towards inexpensive models, rather than large, low-volume saloons.



1932 MG J2 Midget

MG's J2 did for pre-war buyers what the Midget and MGB achieved in the post-war period, by offering keen drivers a real sports car without the huge price-tag.

The J2 was within reach of mere mortals with its £199 10s sticker price and, though not cheap at the time, it made many other sports cars look expensive – and they weren't any quicker.

The exotic J3 and J4 models humbled many more powerful cars on racetracks, and the J2 proved a big hit on the road with sales of 2083 between 1932 and 1934.

It also set the template for MG sports cars to follow and showed that fun, fast driving need not be the preserve of the wealthy few.

By capturing the imaginations of many enthusiastic drivers, MG made it very difficult for rivals to get a look in



1948 Osca MT4

Osca is a name that could easily have become another footnote among Italy's sports-car makers, yet this Bologna firm's success in racing earned it a huge reputation way beyond the size of the business.

The MT4 was a key model in this success story, which resulted in a breathtaking 92 outright wins and 109 class victories between 1948 and 1966.

Class honours would have been easy for Osca by focusing on engine-capacity rules to avoid competition with more powerful machinery.

However, the MT4s didn't only dominate the 1500cc category, these cars routinely beat rivals with much bigger engines thanks to their advanced twin-overhead-cam motors.



1953 Porsche 550 Spyder

Porsche's first-ever, purpose-made track car was still very much for the road as well, which made it ideally suited to competition at Germany's Nürburgring.

Appropriately, in the context of this feature, in its first race, the nimble, fast, and light 550 Spyder was given the nickname 'Giant Killer' for the way it ran circles around its rivals on track.

Even on this fast circuit, cars with much bigger engines could not touch the air-cooled Porsche. Its 1498cc engine gave the car a top speed of 138mph, and the performance made

Porsche a company to be reckoned with both in racing and on the road for the way its cars could outdo heavy-hitting rivals.



1957 Abarth-Fiat 750

Few car makers have made so much of so little, but Abarth had a knack for building brilliant sporting cars from humble Fiat components.

The 750 is the perfect example of this in the way it took the basic engine from a Fiat 600 and increased it to 747cc.

In doing so, power increased to give the tiny Abarth a top speed as high as 100mph, depending on the body fitted.

Roadster and coupé styles were used for the Abarth-Fiat 750, which had all the style of larger Alfa Romeo or Fiat models.

However, these bigger cars didn't have the effervescent performance of the 750, which was underlined in 1957 with a class win on the Mille Miglia.



1957 Lotus Elite

When many budding sports-car companies were still relying on simple ladder chassis, Lotus produced the world's first workable glass fibre-monocoque construction car.

That alone would have made the Lotus Elite deal a blow to many rivals, but the car's superb aerodynamics, light weight and excellent handling all added to its ability to embarrass more powerful sports-car opposition.

Another giant-killing element of the Elite was its engine, which was a Coventry-Climax unit that fitted perfectly with the minimal-weight ethos of the car – it could hit 130mph.

The model notched up 988 sales, plus it helped Lotus shift its image to become a serious player in the sports-car market.



1957 Lotus Seven

If the Elite represented the pioneering engineering of Lotus, the Seven of the same year showed Chapman's commercial nous.

While its tubular chassis and simple bodywork were similar to previous models and many rivals, the Seven did it all better and used affordable, proprietary parts along the way.

By making the Seven as light and simple as possible, it was also quick and handled brilliantly.

For sports-cars fans, which was all they wanted and the Seven offered all of this in a low-cost self-assembly package that could also be used for weekend motorsport.

On track or road, few could get close to the Seven for the same money.



1959 Devin C

The Devin C was the brainchild of company founder Bill Devin.

A keen racer, he spotted the potential of Chevrolet's new Corvair model and its flat-six engine.

Squeezing this motor and its transmission into his lightweight chassis and covering it with a glass fibre body created a fast, agile, and pretty two-seat sports car.

That might have been the end of the Devin C's story, but then the Granatelli brothers, already well-known racers, borrowed the car and took it to the Bonneville Speed Trials where it was unofficially clocked at 165mph.

Not content with this, the brothers then took the car drag racing in southern California and set several records, until the car was banned for outrunning so many established competitors.



1960 Chevrolet Corvair

There had been a growing compact-car class in the US for a number of years when the Chevrolet Corvair was launched in 1960.

By taking a very different approach, the Corvair made almost all of its rivals look outdated and dull by comparison.

Here was a car with a rear-mounted flat-six engine made from aluminium that was great to drive, quiet, economical, and roomy inside.

It won Chevrolet many awards and plaudits, and made rivals from the likes of Ford seem staid.

The subsequent tribulations faced by the Corvair as a result of Ralph Nader's book *Unsafe at Any Speed* don't detract from the fact this Chevrolet took on the best from the US and Europe and beat them.

A fitting tribute to how much of a giant killer the Corvair was in its day is that Chevrolet sold 1.8 million of them in nine years.



1961 Ginetta G4

The Walklett brothers who founded Ginetta Cars had been knocking on the door of greatness with previous models, but the G4 was their breakthrough car.

If you couldn't afford the step up to an exotic sports car, the G4 delivered the performance and handling you were after at a more attractive price, thanks to most being sold in kit form.

Like the Lotus Seven, the tubular chassis was light and stiff, while the curvy glass fibre body gave the G4 a dash of style.

With 115mph possible from a modest Ford 1.5-litre engine, the G4 was great on the road or track.

It was Ginetta's first car to sell in decent numbers and, while volumes didn't rival MG or Triumph, the G4 easily outpointed an MGB or TR4.



1961 Jaguar E-type

It might seem odd to consider a pillar of the classic car world as a giant killer, yet the Jaguar E-type was exactly that when it arrived in 1961.

Here was a car with the looks of the best from a coachbuilder, plus the performance to back it up.

The bold claim of a 150mph top speed might have been more hype than reality but grabbed attention for the Jaguar and made it the must-have car in the 1960s.

There simply wasn't anything to rival the E-type's performance and style for the same price, which meant the opposition from Aston Martin, Ferrari, Jensen, and others couldn't compete with the allure of the Jaguar and its ability to upset the establishment.



1961 Mini Cooper

Whichever way you cut it; the Mini Cooper of 1961 was a giant killer.

Tuned versions of humble family cars were nothing new, but the Cooper had that name attached, plus a 1-litre engine delivering a 60% boost in power over the standard unit.

Add in better brakes, tyres and gearshift, and the Cooper was a whole new breed of sports car.

This was quickly taken up by those who might have chosen a two-seat roadster, because they

realised, they could have all the fun with the extra practicality of four seats and a solid roof.

The Mini Cooper's rally and race successes only added to its giant-killing credentials.



1963 Alpine A110

Jean Rédélé's Alpine firm had been building interesting, quick sports cars based on Renault mechanical parts for some time when the A110 was launched in 1963.

Suddenly, the wider world found out about these unusual rear-engined cars, thanks to their lightning performance and handling.

Drivers who might have been considering a Porsche or Lotus now had another choice, and the A110 backed this up with motorsport success.

An Alpine A110 was the first car to win the new World Rally Championship in 1973, to put the likes of Ford, Lancia, Porsche, and Saab firmly in their place.



1965 Honda S800

Anyone who doubted Honda's intent to be a serious car manufacturer only had to look at the S800 to know what the Japanese firm was capable of.

It might not have sold in the same numbers as the MG Midget or Triumph Spitfire, with 25,853 S800s built in total, but the tiny two-seat sports car was light years ahead in engineering terms.

The 791cc four-cylinder engine could carry the Honda to 100mph. It could also rev to 9500rpm yet was absolutely dependable while also returning 35mpg economy.

Nifty handling was the icing on the cake for the Honda S800, which signalled to the world that Japan could build great sports cars that were more than capable of beating the existing big names.



1965 Lancia Fulvia Coupé

Lancia's engineering-led approach to making cars was more than evident when it produced a coupé version of the Fulvia.

Rather than just rebody the saloon, the Italian firm shortened the wheelbase by some 150mm (5.9in) and gave it a crisp look all its own.

It proved a good move, because the Fulvia offered 2+2 seating and a much keener drive than most of its obvious rivals, such as the MGB GT or Triumph GT6.

It made the Fulvia the choice of thinking drivers, while the later, uprated, rally-bred model's 115mph top speed was something few, if any, other 1.6-litre coupés could match.



1975 Volkswagen Golf GTI

The debate about which car is the world's first hot hatch will rage on, but there's no doubt the Volkswagen Golf GTI Mk1 took the breed mainstream.

In turning its already very practical Golf three-door hatch into a sports-car beater, VW effectively killed off the competition from traditional roadsters and coupés.

The VW Golf GTI was more practical and more comfortable, as well as quicker and easier to live with. No longer was a sports car an indulgence or something to give up when family duties called.

Here was a quick, fun car that you could also trundle to the supermarket in. From the VW Golf GTI's launch, every other car maker was playing catch-up.



1976 Škoda Estelle

The Škoda Estelle, or 105 and 120 as it was known outside the UK, was one of the very few Eastern European cars to make any impression on sales charts outside its home bloc.

Some of this was down to its value for money, but much of the reason the Estelle upset its mainstream rivals was success in rallying.

Seemingly, a week didn't go by without an Estelle winning its class or taking outright victory in a rally – and Škoda's marketing department let everyone know.

It gave the Škoda a credibility that no other Eastern European import could hope for and paved the way for the modern Volkswagen-era of cars today.



1984 Peugeot 205 GTI

As the hot-hatch class broadened in the early 1980s, you might have thought there was room for everyone.

Peugeot reckoned differently and consigned most of the sector to the margins with the launch of the 205 GTI.

Its handling was in a different league and there was plenty of performance from the 1.6-litre engine.

The larger 1.9-litre motor added even more pace to the mix, offering 0-60mph in 7.8 secs, versus the 1.6's 8.6-sec time.

Either way, choosing the 205 GTI was an easy option for anyone who valued a thrilling drive above all else, and left rivals like the Ford XR3 and Volkswagen Golf GTI Mk2 floundering in its wake.



1987 Daihatsu Charade GTti

Parked next to most hot hatches, the Daihatsu Charade GTti was more David to their Goliaths, such was the diminutive size of the car.

Like David, the GTti felled some very big opposition and that was down to its turbocharged engine that delivered 100bhp, making it the first production car with 100bhp per litre.

Coupled to its light weight, the GTti covered 0-60mph in 7.7 secs and topped out at 117mph.

That was enough to put it in contention with the best hot hatches on offer in 1987.

Just as impressive was the way the Charade got its power down to the road and how well it handled.

No surprise, then, that this compact giant killer went on to shift 227,790 cars around the world, outselling many more well-known rivals.



1989 Mazda MX-5

There were those who scoffed at Mazda launching a pared-back, two-seat sports car when the world wanted hot hatches.

They're not laughing now, because the MX-5 has sold more than 1 million units and is still going strong.

The original MX-5 (NA) took much of its inspiration from the Lotus Elan, from the looks to the agile handling and snick-snick of the gearchange.

This was all more than enough to tempt hot-hatch drivers into the roadster, as well as reviving the affordable sports-car market.

Soon, every major car maker was trying to get on terms with the MX-5, though none has ever quite managed it yet.



2000 Noble M12

Lee Noble had already demonstrated his prowess at building mid-engined sports cars with his Ultima and then the M10.

However, it was the M12 that upset the supercar establishment when it started beating Ferraris and Porsches in magazine road tests.

Even more galling for the supercar elite was the Noble did with a Ford V6 engine mounted in the middle.

Admittedly, there was a pair of turbochargers fitted, helping it achieve 0-60mph in 3.9 secs, en route to 165mph.

Noble had more up its sleeve as rivals launched new models, culminating in the M400 with 425bhp to give it a power to weight ratio of 401bhp per tonne in 2004, when a Porsche 911 GT3 RS could 'only' muster 282bhp per tonne.

The Noble M400 came with a 185mph top speed, 0-60mph in 3.5 secs, plus a price of £55,995 when new that was less than a basic

Porsche

911's.

