

JAGUAR SPECIAL



By Tony Johnson

Highlands Park in Cromwell is a great racing track with plenty of everything – sweeping curves, long straight, tricky tight turns and fast cars. I attended the post-Easter weekend and was fascinated to see this JAGUAR Special.

It is part of the Grand Prix Specials Team which includes some originals and some new builds that look like they come from the 1950's. 260 Zephyr, BCM Special, The Lycoming Special, Edelbrock Special, Frangapelli Holden and a few others.

The JAGUAR Special was originally started in the 1990's by Barry Longmore of Dunedin

when he acquired a prototype chassis from a run of replica HWM chassis' that were being made of the Russell Duell HWM.

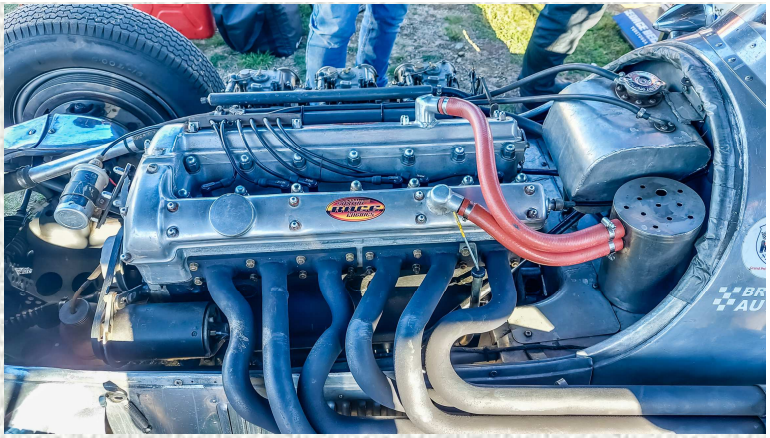
After Barry was tragically killed while travelling to Invercargill in his Mark II Jaguar, the project was taken over by Paul Coghill, who is still the current owner.



This single seat racing car is based on the HWM Jaguar that was raced and hill climbed by Rivers Fletcher in the late 1950's and 1960's in England.

The car is fitted with an aluminium body. The chassis was built by Ferrum Engineering in Dunedin and the front suspension grafted in by Jim Bennett of

Dunedin (Furi Holdings). Jim also designed and built the rear De Dion suspension and grafted in a Jaguar independent differential. He also designed and manufactured the braking system as well as a shortened Morris Minor rack. The front alloy drums were cast in Dunedin and finished off by Ferrum Engineering.



The alloy body was formed in Invercargill by Barry Leitch's company with reshaping the nose and bonnet by Cliff Bennett of Dunedin. Lots of moving parts to this project.

The Jaguar is fitted with a 3.4 litre XK engine, which looked familiar – same as my XK140. But this beast is tuned to deliver

283bhp@5,200rpm, mine is 210bhp. This motor was originally built for jet boat racing. It was designed as an endurance motor for 3 hour events and has never failed to finish an event.

The gearbox is a Moss box with the gear change between the drivers legs!

The car races on Aston Martin DB3 16 inch wheels and is fitted with 650/16 at the rear and 550/16 on the front. To alter the gearing 15 inch wheels are fitted to the rear.

The car is maintained by Kevin Telford (Classic Automotive) since 1999. Apart from Highlands it has raced at the Waimate Street Race, Ruapuna, Wigram, Levels, Teretonga, the Dunedin Street Race and Three Mile Hill Climb.

It sounds like a Jaguar with a deep roar as it pulls away through the curves. It finished middle of the field.

Tony