

Tim Moncrieff is considered the founder of speedway sprintcar racing in Tasmania.

Even before the winged wonders made their debut on the Holiday Isle, Tim was racing interstate with distinction.

In 1970 Tim started to build up the profile of sprintcar racing in Tasmania, strangely enough by racing interstate and showing the boys from the "Big Island" what the Tassie boys were capable of, while at the same time back home promoting the new division vigorously.

His introduction to speedway racing came as a sidecar passenger racing in Victoria and Tasmania.

His motorsport background has been in motocross (then called scrambles), winning Tasmanian championships in 1959 and 1961, as well as several grass track and beach racing titles.

Tim raced as a speedway sidecar passenger with Geoff Howell for a short time before graduating into sedan racing in an FJ Holden.

While visiting his friend Graeme McCubbin in Victoria a while later, Tim attended an Australia v England solo test meeting.

Super modifieds were on the same programme and Tim liked what he saw and was hooked, adopting the attitude "I want one of those."

Back home he built four cars and raced demonstrations at Tasmanian tracks with visiting Victorian drivers in the hope the new division would catch on in his home state.

In the meantime Tim continued to race on the mainland, where he became known as the "Tassie Tiger" after competing in and winning many races against such champions as Garry Rush, Graeme McCubbin, Steve Brazier, Dick Briton, Bill Wigzell, and Sid Hopping.

Tim's car was fitted with a Holden-six motor and he impressed mainlanders with his driving when he won three races from three starts at Redline Speedway at Ballarat in 1970.

Not surprisingly, it was the same year

that he won the first ever Tasmanian sprintcar championship also after founding the Tasmanian Modified Sprintcar Association, of which he was eventually made a life member.

Tim also became a member of the Australian Sprintcar Council and attended and raced at all the major meetings and championships around the country, growing with the sport almost from its infancy.

He went on to win the Australian asphalt championship on his home track at Latrobe in 1978 and in 1979 won nine mainland features, including an impressive six in a row.

The same year he also finished third in the Australian championship at Warrnambool (Vic.) and fourth in Adelaide the following year.

Tim was also one of the first Australians to make the now regular off-season trek to the US - the home of sprintcar racing and became one of the first to import a US-built chassis (in this case a Tognotti), making a big impression on the national scene again.

At various stages during the late 1970s Tim broke lap records at Brooklyn (Vic.), Bridgewater (Tas.), Warrnambool (Vic.), Paramatta (NSW), and Liverpool (NSW) to name a few tracks.

During his illustrious career, Tim temporarily retired from the sport twice but was urged back each time, one of them being for the 1976 Australian championship at his home track of Latrobe.

He eventually retired in 1982 due to business commitments, but stayed involved in the sport behind the scenes as part of the Modified Sprintcar Association of Tasmania.

Although his record only includes one Tasmanian and one Australian title, those lucky enough to have seen him race will remember him for his exciting style, blistering pace, skillful driving, fearless attitude, and sheer determination.

Profile by Martin Agatyn.



PROFILE

Tim Moncrieff



INDUCTED: 2010



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