

Spirit of Dick Jacobs is very much alive

Stuart Dean's MG YB Coupé rolls back the years to the Mill Garage heyday.

One of the great joys of vintage and historic racing is seeing relatively little known cars back in action, and nowhere is this seen to better advantage than with the Vintage Sports Car Club. This year's Spring Start race meeting at Silverstone was no exception and the field for the 1950s Sports and Sports Racing Cars saw Lister Knobbly and Lotus Eleven Le Mans facing up to Maserati 300S, Allard and HWM Jaguar.

Unusually in this 1950s field was the Playford MG, an MG TB



Job done, as Stuart Dean in the ex-Dick Jacobs special-bodied YB Coupé has held off the MG TB of George Edney in the 1950s sports car race at the Vintage Sports Car Club 2015 Silverstone Spring Start race meeting.

and the ex-Dick Jacobs MG YB Coupé. Jacobs was one of the famous MG names from the 1940s and through into the 1970s as a highly successful driver, team owner and entrant, most notably associated with his pale green MGAs and the Jacobs Midgets. His Mill Garage premises were a port of call for many hundreds of MG owners for years, until construction of the M11 motorway swept this patch of MG history away.

The special bodied Coupé, which raced at Silverstone in the hands of Stuart Dean, was a project with the blessing of MG General Manager John Thornley. Mill Garage acquired the last MG YB chassis from Abingdon and this was fitted with a pretty glassfibre coupé body, a 1500cc engine, Wolseley front brakes and knock-off wire wheels. The car had a successful competition history that included Goodwood, Silverstone and the Brighton Speed Trials. In so many ways the 1954 Coupé is typical of the one-off cars of the 1950s period where design freedom was positively encouraged and names such as Colin Chapman were already taking their first and very rapid steps to future success.

I was fortunately able to meet Dick Jacobs at Mill Garage and the impression was of someone who was not only an enthusiast through and through, but totally loyal to Abingdon. His daughter, the late and charming Pat Horsley, was equally dedicated to MG. Both would surely have been pleased to see the Jacobs name still appearing in historic racing circles with the MG YB Coupé.

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