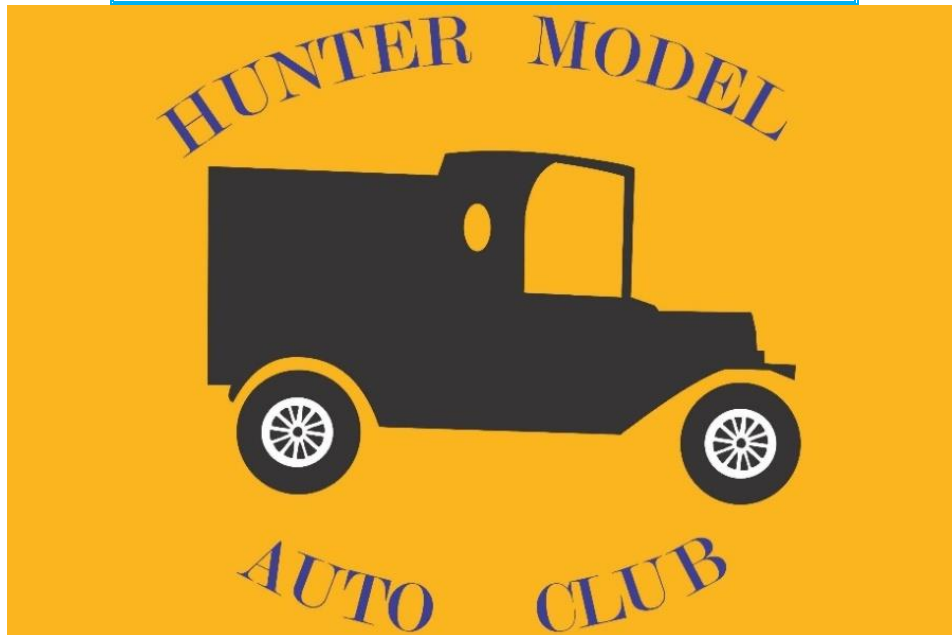


-GEARBOX-



APRIL 2026

HUNTER MODEL AUTO CLUB INC.

CONTACT: email: huntermodelautoclub@gmail.com

Bill Kenchington on Ph (02) 4945 4830 OR Andrew Vile on (02) 4933 5607 in business hours only.

**** NEXT MEETING TUESDAY 14th APRIL ****

**** HMAC TOY FAIR SUNDAY 9th AUGUST ****

What's Happening

Kurri Kurri Display Day - 29th March @ Kurri Kurri Public School

JDM Festival - 11th April @ Sydney Motorsport Park, Eastern Creek

All British Day - 18th April @ Foreshore Park, Newcastle East

Tuggerah Cars Under The Stars - 25th April @ Central Coast Recreation Complex, Tuggerah

All Aussie Automotive Show - 26th April @ Gough Whitlam Park, Earlwood

Cars & Coffee - 3rd May @ Fighterwold, Williamtown

Fort Scratchley visit - this year TBA @ Newcastle

HUNTER MODEL AUTO CLUB INCORPORATED

Minutes of Club Meeting Held at Edgeworth Sport and Rec Club on 10 March 2026

Meeting Opened: 7.30 pm.

Members Present: 16

Apologies: 6

Visitors: Nil

Previous Minutes: Moved: Trevor Palmer Seconded: Brian Blyth "That the February 2026 Club Minutes be accepted". Carried.

Treasurer's Report: The Treasurer reported that the Club funds stand at \$2,009.29. Moved: Paul Campbell Seconded: Ben Wing "That the Treasurer's Report be accepted" Carried.

Correspondence:

OUTWARDS:

- i. Members and Others – March 2026 "Gearbox".
- ii. Members – March 2026 Model Competition and Meeting Reminders.
- iii. Members – Invitation to visit Tractor Restoration Projects at Hamilton North.
- iv. Prospective Stallholders – Expressions of Interest for tables at 2026 Hunter Toy and Hobby Fair.
- v. Members – WAMCC February 2026 "Showcase" Magazine.
- vi. Members – Advice of passing of Club Member David White.

INWARDS:

- i. Barry Lloyd – Thanks for the March 2026 "Gearbox" Magazine.
- ii. Des Barnes – CTCS February 2026 Magazine.
- iii. Ian Hind - Thanks for the March 2026 "Gearbox" Magazine.
- iv. Ian Hind – WAMCC February 2026 "Showcase" Magazine.
- v. Peter Finch – Will be a stallholder at the 2026 Toy Fair.
- vi. Tony Bezzina – Will be a stallholder at the 2026 Toy Fair.
- vii. Bill Kenchington and Terry Payne - Will be stallholders at the 2026 Toy Fair.
- viii. Lesley White – Advice of passing of David White on Saturday 7 March 2026.

Moved: Trevor Palmer Seconded: David Rosser "That the Correspondence be accepted". Carried.

Matters Arising:

- i) Kurri Kurri Nostalgia Weekend – Our Club display will be held at the Public School and on **Sunday 29 March 2026**.
Saturday set up is from 8.00am and parking will be available adjacent to the hall, however the usual access by Rawson Street is closed and access is to be gained by Alexandra Street.
It is suggested that you arrive by 8.00 am on Sunday to secure street parking close by.
- ii) Proposed Club visit to "Sydney Tramway Museum" at Loftus – Date yet to be decided.

- iii) Proposed Club visit to "Fort Scratchley Museum" at Newcastle East – **Action** – Paul to firm up a date with the Museum and get back to members.
- iv) Proposed Club visit to "National Motorcycle Museum" at Nabiac – Date proposed is around mid-year.
- v) Farm Tractor Restoration Visit – This visit was held on Tuesday morning 10 March 2026 – A total of 6 members attended and all were very impressed by what was being achieved with the students.

General Business:

- i) Passing of David White – David passed away in hospital on Saturday 7 March 2026. David was an inaugural Club member, having joined in 1984. A minute’s silence was held in memory of David.
- ii) Allison McCallum Update – Allison’s heart transplant recovery is progressing well, however she will remain in hospital for some time yet. Our thoughts and best wishes continue to be with Allison and Scott at this time.
- iii) 2026 Toy and Hobby Fair Charity – Nominations were called for from the floor and the following three (3) nominations were received:- a) Tractor Restoration Project. b) St. Vincent’s Hospital, Sydney (Heart Transplant Unit). c) Cancer Council Hunter Region Branch. The members then voted with the result that the Tractor Restoration Project will be our chosen Charity for 2026.

Model Competitions:

“Actual” Model Competition: “A Convertible” – Any scale up to five (5) models.

1 st	Pieter Zeeman	Citroens.....	15 Points
2 nd	Ken McGregor.....	Porsche and Edsel.....	14 Points
Equal 3 rd	Bill Kenchington.....	Fords.....	13 Points
And	Andrew Vile.....	Chevrolet.....	13 Points

“Virtual” Model Competition: “Muster of Utes” - Any scale up to five (5) models and ONE PHOTO ONLY.

1 st	Ken McGregor	Commodores.....	19 Points
2 nd	Bill Kenchington	Chevrolet, Vauxhall and Ford.....	15 Points
3 rd	Brian Blyth.....	Matchbox, Ebro and Trax.....	13 Points

Next “Actual” Model Category - April: “A Car of 1500 ccs or less” - Any scale up to three (3) models.

Next “Virtual” Model Category - April: “The Cheapest Model You’ve Ever Bought” – Any scale one (1) model.

Meeting Closed: 8.10 pm.

Placegetters for the March 2026 Virtual model comp

*** "A Muster Of Utes" - up to 5 models ***



1st Ken



2nd Bill K.



3rd Brian

As mentioned in the minutes David White one of our inaugural club members has passed away. On the following pages is an article from Issue 51 of the Keeping Trax magazine about him.

TRAX TALK

The people of Newcastle just north of Sydney have always been passionate about their town, their sport, their buses, and their collections. A large portion of our customer base comes from the Newcastle area and one of those collectors is David White. Here we meet a man whose passion for collecting Trax models dates right back to the start.



David holding the first real car he ever owned. Well a Trax version anyway.

After a brief drive up the freeway I was greeted by an apologetic David and his wife Leslie who told me that the place was a tad crowded at the moment as the family had come back to roost. Therefore there was a four bedroom house worth of furniture crammed into his four bedroom house on top of the furniture they already had. So it was

straight out to the shed to survey the collection where my first vision was of arrows. Lots of arrows! David and his son have been mad archers for many years and the words 'silent but deadly' suddenly sprung to mind.

A large portion of David's model car collection was stored away to make room for the family but is destined to return to the display cabinets for all to see. Luckily like a



lot of collectors he has some purpose built cabinets to house his collections and as such his ongoing set of Lledo 'Days Gone' models are still out for all to see. Having started collecting these from when they started in 1982, David has a complete set right up until 1995 when he says 'they just started getting too repetitive and too expensive'!

Like a lot of model car collectors David tries to ensure all his collections are complete. Short of a dozen or so he has every Trax model right back to 1986 starting with 8001, and his Hot Wheels collections is just as good. Along with complete sets of the older Hot Wheels cars, he has full sets unopened from 2007 and 2008, and only needs 5 to complete 2009, and 6 to complete 2010.

There's a complete set of the James Bond 007 collection in 1:43 scale, and he is working hard on completing his ongoing set of

military vehicles also in 1:43 scale from an English company that produces two new models each month. This set is just like a history of armoured vehicles from the twentieth century that includes tanks, half tracks, and Jeeps. There are 110 in the series and with 64 on the shelf already he has a few more months to go to get the collection complete.

Since putting his framing business on hold David has been able to utilise his lateral filing cabinet to store the Hot Wheels models and the military collection but for the time being, the Trax collection is living back in their mailer packs in some storage boxes. There's also a large collection of plastic model kits "just waiting to be made" says David with a smile, including a 1:24 scale Revell snow plough and an AMT 1:24 brewery wagon towed by six Clydesdales.



When asked about favourite models or wish list models the answer is immediate. "Without question my favourite models are the Holden EH's either in Trax or Opal although I may be biased as I'm also currently restoring a real one", says David. "But I also have a soft spot for TR26E, the Koala Grey XK Falcon as my first car was an XL Falcon in this colour.

We all know collecting model cars is a personal hobby where collections take shape depending on the collector's preferences. Often these can come from simply following a particular manufacturer like Ford or Chrysler, sometimes it comes from personal history where dad had this car and your auntie Dot had that car. An outsider can often tell a lot about a collector by studying their collection. What they collect, how they maintain their collection, how they display it and

their knowledge of the subject matter.

For some people like David though, the hobby of collecting anything is as much about the collection, as it is about the actual process of collecting the items themselves. Things like making sure if there were 7 in a series that he has all 7, ensuring that when stored they're all stored together to keep the set complete, and keeping up to date with new additions, current values, and where the best places are to source those hard to find items. David also carries a notebook with him wherever he goes in case he comes across some models for sale so he can check if he has them or not.

As a collector David sets a great example for new collectors to follow, as well as demonstrating that the level of passion you have for your hobby determines how great your collection becomes.

Did you Know - The Corvette became the American Astronaut's car.



It is amazing sometimes the things you learn when doing research on your favourite cars. Being a big fan of the Pontiac GTO, I recall reading about the GTO based 'Monkeemobile' and how Pontiac, through their advertising guru Jim Wangers, used it as a promotional deal with the producers of the Monkees TV show. In a previous **Gearbox** article I wrote, *'Wangers cooked up an ingenious deal with Kelloggs which led to a promotion called the 'Kellogg's TV Screen-Stakes.' It coincided with the release of the newly designed 1968 Pontiac GTO model and was featured on Kelloggs 'Rice Krispies' and 'Raison Bran' cereal boxes. The winner received a new 1968 GTO convertible and a guest spot on a Monkees show. The 15 next best prize winners won a new 1968 GTO Hardtop. 1,500 Monkees LP records were also offered as minor prizes. Wangers said it was a very, very successful promotion with 42 million boxes of Kellogg's cereals, promoting Pontiac, put on a table each day.'*

Over the years many celebrities from the sporting world or the big screen have been sponsored to drive a particular brand of automobile and some television shows have also been supported by the automakers. Members may recall a **Gearbox** article on the 1953 Nash-Healey roadster where we learnt that Nash-Kelvinator were great at establishing deals to have their products seen on American TV. That included the popular TV show '*Superman*' where Lois Lane drove a Nash Rambler convertible and Superman, when being the mild-mannered reporter Clark Kent, drove an equally mild-mannered Nash-Healey roadster.

This also occurred in the Australian television industry. As an example, Crawford Productions who made the TV show '*Homicide*,' were sponsored at one point by the Canada Cycle and Motor Company who assembled Studebaker vehicles in Australia and they often staged a scene where Studebaker vehicles were spotted in the show. In the early days, Studebaker Larks were being driven by the Homicide Detectives when on duty, or Crawfords would have a Studebaker Hawk parked in a conspicuous location during a scene shoot.

La Escuderia recently had an article on this subject and wrote, *'One of the great business strategies in the history of General Motors was when they decided to lend Chevrolet Corvettes to NASA astronauts in the middle of the space race.'* General Motors were quite clever as they appeared to have got in early in sponsoring the men who would go on to become the next band of popular celebrities, the United States astronauts. Perhaps they saw men who would be pushing the limits of human endurance in the new space frontier and who would appreciate the high performance characteristics of a sports car, and for these new space explorers, it would be the Chevrolet Corvette.

But there was a scenario that had panned out before General Motors looked at splashing out with new Corvettes for the Astronauts. Though the Russian Yuri Gagarin had been the first man into outer space in April 1961, NASA had Alan Shepard equal this feat a month later. Shepard, a former Naval pilot, loved fast cars and was a big fan of Corvettes being on his second model when he joined the space program in 1959. Chevrolet's Chief Engineer Zora Arkus-Duntov became friends with Shepard, and even invited him to test drive pre-production Corvette models in Detroit. General Motors then President, Ed Cole, decided that Shepard should be presented with the keys to a brand new 1962 Chev Corvette. **See the author's Auto Art 1:18 scale model representation in the lead-in pic.**

Back then it was not GM's policy to give away vehicles, unless it was for exceptional causes. However, Cole believed that even though it was good publicity for the General, he genuinely felt it was a worthwhile gift as astronauts were risking their lives in a relatively new and unknown frontier for their Country. But rules were rules, and the NASA astronauts were prohibited from making product endorsements rendering Shepard's gift a one-off occurrence.

Enter Jim Rathmann who was one of the top '*IndyCar*' racing drivers throughout the 1950s and early 1960s. He had won the Indianapolis 500 in 1960 and was soon being encouraged by senior management at GM to open a Chevrolet and Cadillac dealership close to Cape Canaveral.

Rathmann would soon become a close friend to Alan Shepard and subsequently, some of NASA's early astronauts in training at Cape Canaveral, with many having Rathmann modify their personal vehicles for high performance. A trend was also started where most astronauts were soon driving Corvettes and it became the 'in car' for that area. Then in 1966, the Cape Kennedy Corvette Club was formed under the sponsorship of Rathmann.

NASA's rule of the non-endorsement of products by the astronauts was soon extended further by adding that no employee, regardless of their position, could accept any form of gift. Ed Cole knew of the popularity of the Corvette within the ranks of the astronauts and between he, Rathmann, and General Motors executives, they came up with the idea of having the astronauts rent a Corvette by way of an executive lease program for an 'emblematical' amount of one dollar a year. Sneaky, but perfectly legal. One of the first to take up this offer was Neil Armstrong, the first man to walk on the moon. His choice was a 1967 Corvette Sting Ray model, which is represented by the author's Exoto 1:18 scale model shown *in the next pic.*



La Escuderia wrote that the chance to own one of America's top performing sports car was something many astronauts jumped at, as they were pretty much all lead-foots. They added, '*the longtime link between astronaut and Corvette was born..... The driving adventures of several became part of both Corvette and Astronaut lore. Shepard and Grissom especially engaged in a friendly rivalry, constantly hopping up their cars in an attempt to outdo the other man.*' Interestingly, most astronauts selected two Corvettes, one for the family and one for their personal use. Later, the Apollo 12 crew decided to drive matching 1969 Corvette Stingray coupes under the scheme, and ended up with a trio of identical cars painted in riverside gold with black 'wings' added post-factory as a symbol of their friendship. *See next pic.* Rathmann added a thin white line between the black and gold and a special red, white and blue decal was added above the front mudguard 'Stingray' badge.



Though there would be two more manned missions to the moon, General Motors ended this unique promotional concept in 1971. The final 'Astronaut' Corvettes, another trio, were painted as shown *in the next pic. Terry.*



Placegetters for the March 2026 Real model comp.

*** "A Convertible" - up to 5 models ***



1st Pieter



2nd Ken



=3rd Andrew



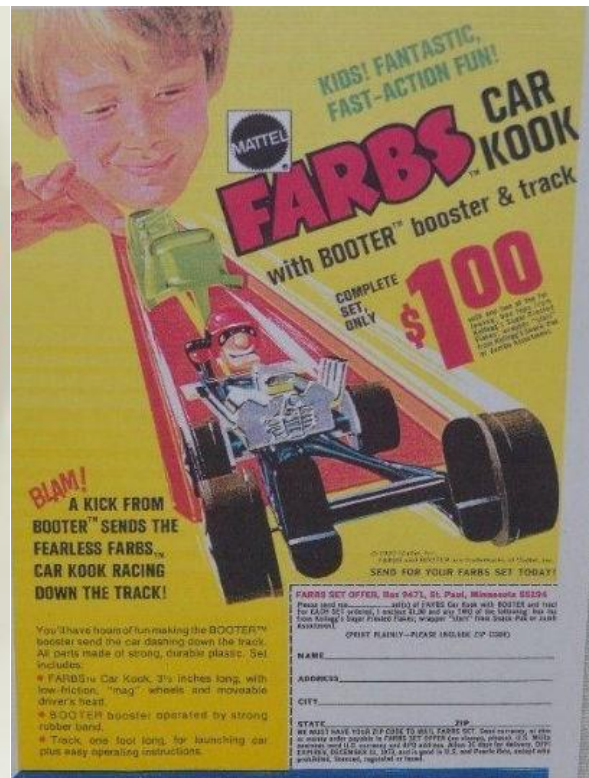
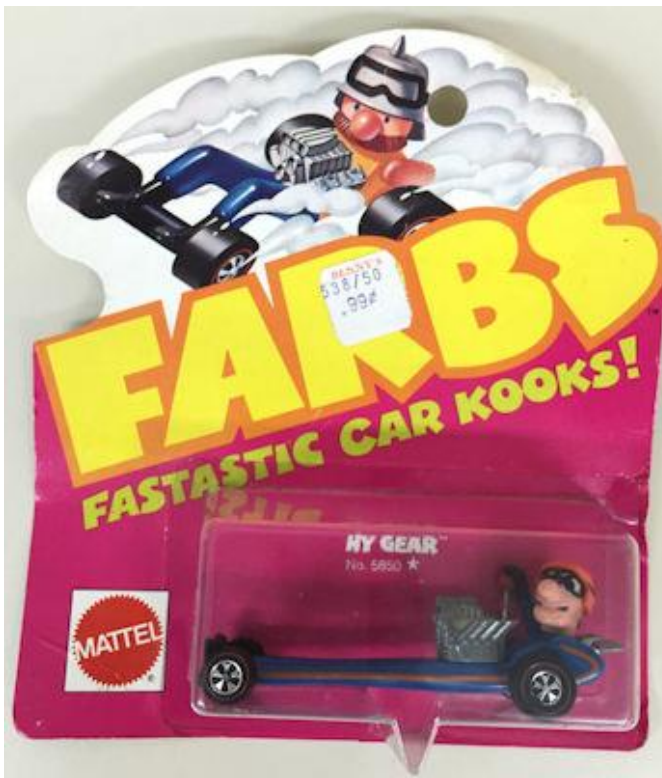
=3rd Bill K

---FARBS---

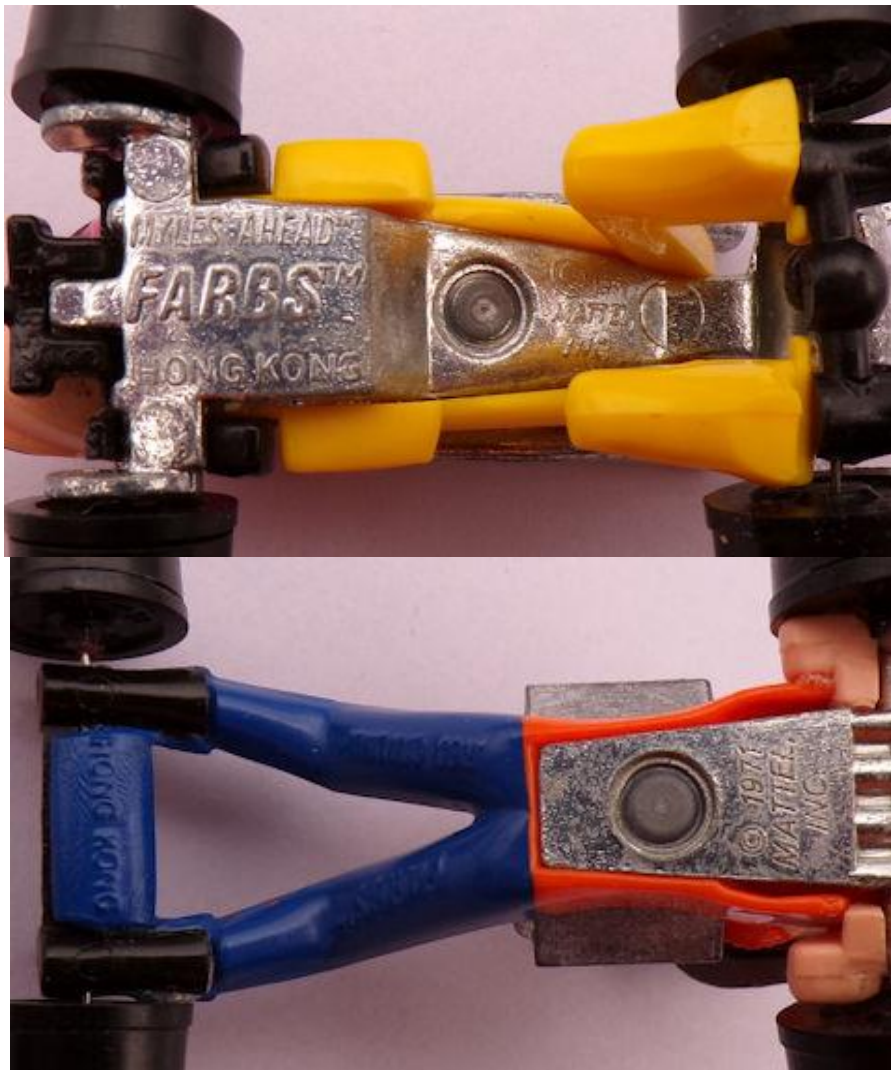
Once Hot Wheels hit the market in 1968, Mattel was always looking for way to increase their overall model car sales. To do this they often branched off sub-series. If they got some good sales the series continued, otherwise it was dropped. One such series was Farbs. This was released in 1972 and only lasted for a single year. There were only four models released, and their names were all a 'play on words'. Below is some of the original advertising material.



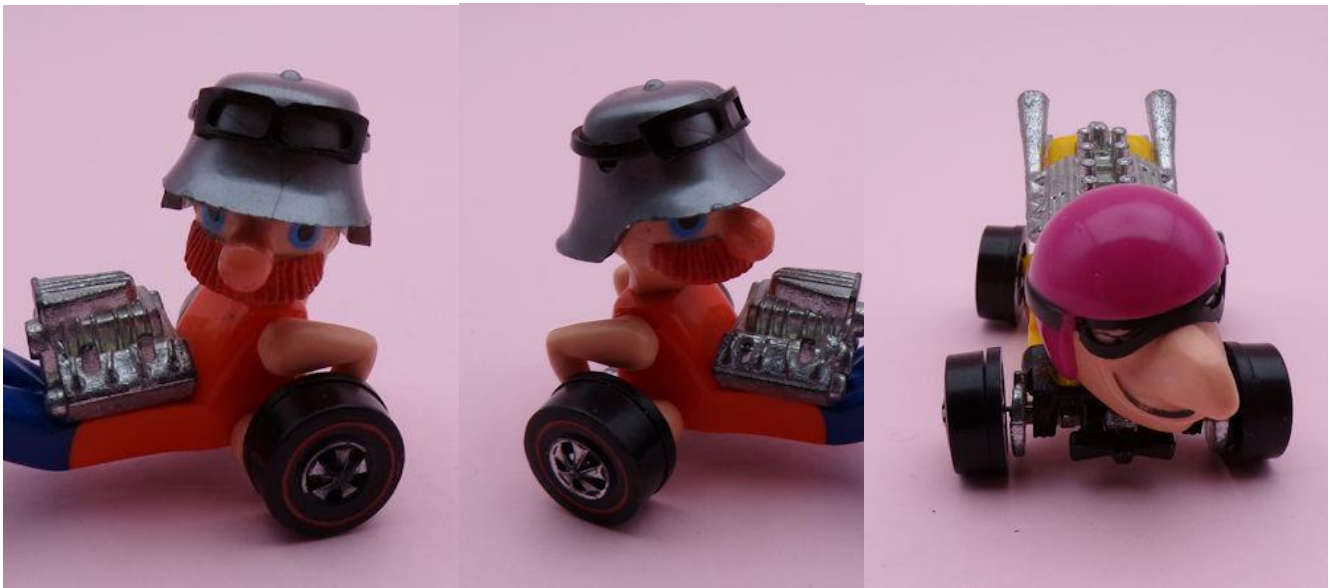
They came on a pink/white card, labelled as 'Farbs Fastastic Car Kooks!'. Although Mattel is shown on the card, it does not mention Hot Wheels anywhere. They were also available in baggies with a header car of 'Forget-Me-Nots'. On the right ([next page](#)) is the on-pack offer on Kellogg's Sugar Frosted Flakes (in the USA).



The metal base shows 'Farbs' and the name of the model. They have copyright 1971, for their 1972 release. And they were all made in Hong Kong. On the first picture all the information is on the unpainted metal base. But on the second picture Farbs and the model name is on the blue leg (due to the smaller base), and Hong Kong is between the feet.



And now to the most unique feature of the model. The body of the driver is the vehicle itself, with the wheels attached to the arms and legs. All four models have the ability to turn their heads, and have black racing goggles.



The design of the heads reminds you of some of the characters from the Wacky Races cartoon series, with their large noses and elongated jaws. The cars use the same redline wheels that the standard Hot Wheels cars had. Thus they would run down the orange track just like a normal car.

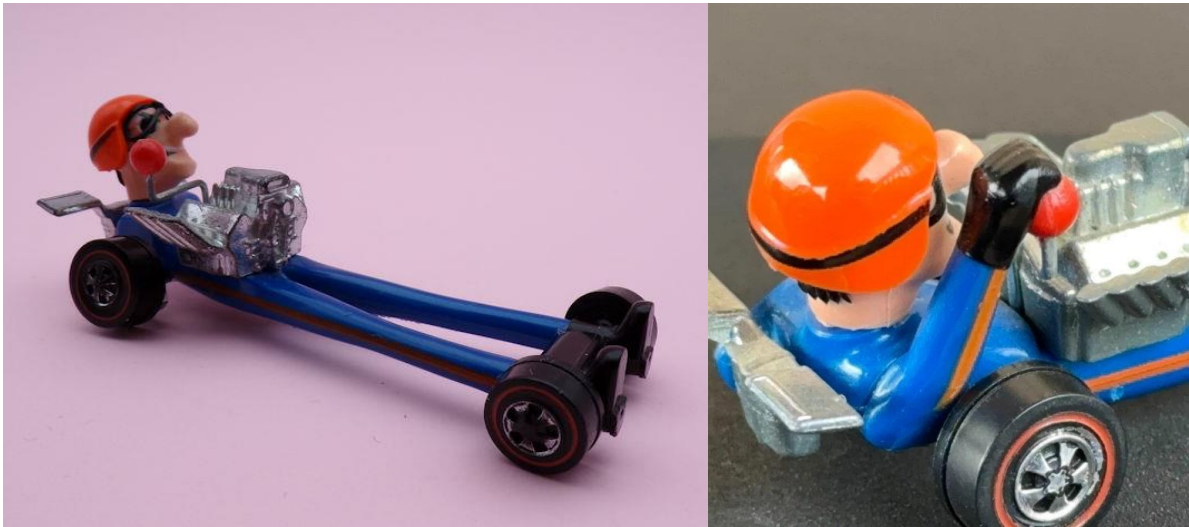


If fact there were some special Farbs track sets available. These contained a 'boot' to help move them along the track. These sets are now very rare, but you can find the green 'boot' for sale by itself. Below is a group photo of what I own.



Hy Gear #5850

The man is lying on his back, with an engine on his stomach, and his legs are quite long. He is in a blue tracksuit with a red stripe, and an orange helmet. His right hand is also on the gearshift. Note that on my model this has broken off. On the right shows what it should look like.



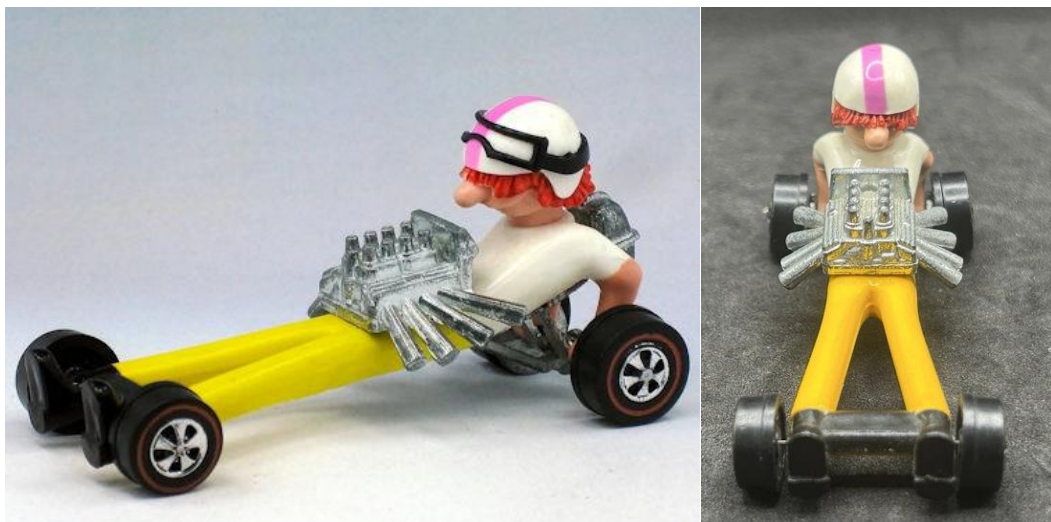
Myles Ahead #5851

This time the man is on his hands and knees with the engine on his back. He's in a yellow tracksuit with a red stripe, and a magenta coloured helmet.



Hot Rodney #5854

Only one I don't have. The man is lying on his back, with an engine on his stomach, with shorter legs this time. He has yellow pants, a white shirt, and a white helmet. Easy to lose the goggles on this one.



Red Catchup #5852

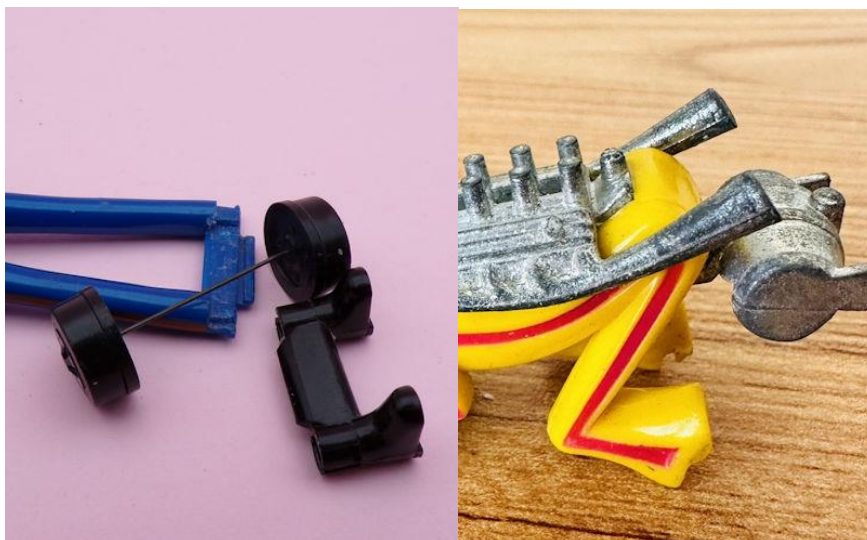
This model is a man sitting with his knees up, with an engine on his stomach. He has blue pants, an orange shirt, and a grey helmet. Again it is easy to lose the goggles.



There were two additional models slated for release that never made it past the prototype stage. These were to be called Bye-A-Nose (left) and Wyndan Cheeks (right).



But the models do have a design flaw, which is at the end of the metal body where the plastic feet attach. If/when these fall off, then the axles (and wheels) also detach. The Hy Gear model I own has this problem (left). Thus it was very easy for these two pieces to go missing. There are lots of the Myles Ahead castings on Ebay missing their entire rear wheel assembly (right). \$60+, it's got to be a joke. As any serious collector will know, once pieces are missing the value of the model plummets.



And I note that most of the models for sale are located in the USA. So how I got them in Australia is a mystery.



You'll have to guess the ultimate problem here and why they didn't sell. But I would suggest there are only so many design possibilities where you could use a body to create a vehicle. But they are an interesting insight into what Mattel was doing in the early 1970s. *Dave S.*

---Final Thoughts---

I know some of you may be extremely disappointed (ha-ha) that the article on the Volkswagen W12 models is not in this magazine. But obviously other things happened that caused my original content to be altered. To finish things off, a couple of more pictures of David. On the left is at our swap meet in 2007, and on the right is from our 2015 Frontline visit.

