

# HOW SWEDE IT IS



**V**OLVO drivers have been the butt of car jokes down the years, with the stereotypical driver usually being an erratic elderly motorist who sits behind the wheel of a boxy, old-fashioned car.

Enter the Volvo of today – sleek, sophisticated looking vehicles set to swap paint with the best of them in the V8 Supercars Championship, which started in Adelaide yesterday.

After a 15-year hiatus from the Australian motorsport scene, the Swedish giant is back Down Under and attracting a legion of new fans.

It is the fifth brand to join the might of Ford and Holden and comes a year after Nissan and Mercedes made their bid for top spot on the racing car scoreboard.

So, has the famous Scandinavian carmaker changed with the times or are they still stuck in the past?

The man behind the Volvo Polestar Racing team, Garry Rogers, of Garry Rogers Motorsport, admitted he's copped a few Volvo jokes since joining the team.

"People ring us and say 'have you got your bowls hat on, got your tweed jacket, where's your desert boots and are you going to play with the old ladies in the park today?' he said yesterday from the pits as he prepared for his inaugural race in Adelaide. "All those jokes – I love them, bring it on."

Rogers, who switched from racing Holden Commodores, said the new S60 sedan was nothing like Volvos of the past. "I'm a bodgie at heart – I love tattoos, fast cars, all that activity and I drive an S60 Volvo," he said of his completely opposite characteristics to the "typical" Volvo driver.

"OK, I am given one (a Volvo) but I've driven a lot of good sports cars and this is a great car."

The 68-year-old said he believed Volvo's entry into the V8s was bringing a "new breed" of fans to Australian car racing. "There seem to be a lot of older people I've not seen at the races before coming along. They're interested and are keen and that's what we need, more supporters," he said.

Smart, visually appealing and safe are just some of the features Rogers is pleased with in the "superbly built" cars. And Volvo's re-entry into Australian motorsports seems to be paying dividends.

Since the company announced they would be back on the starting grid this year, Volvo has experienced plenty of interest in the new S60 sedan – the road-going cousin drivers Scott McLaughlin and Robert Dahlgren will drive on the track today.

Volvo Australia marketing and

Once much maligned, Swedish carmaker Volvo is making its Clipsal 500 debut this week, as the company attracts a new legion of fans and drivers, writes **Katrina Stokes**.



**IN THE FAMILY:** Helen Judd has kept one of the family's older Volvos for her granddaughter, Jessica Judd-Ireland, to learn in.

Picture: DEAN MARTIN

communications director Oliver Peagam said the designs of modern day Volvos were "far removed from the old, boxy image" from decades ago.

He said entry into the premier car race would continue to show potential buyers the "Volvo of today is nothing like Volvo of the past".

"Every European luxury car brand has significant performance and motorsport credentials in its line-up and history, and we are no different having won Australia's greatest race, the Bathurst 1000, back in 1988 and the Australian Touring Car Championship in 1986," Mr Peagam said.

"By entering Australia's top tier motorsport category we believe this will contribute to the fast-changing perception of the wider Volvo brand."

Volvo Car Club of SA vice president, Helen Judd, believes Volvo's image first originated from "mostly older people with a bit of money" who used to buy the cars.

"That's how the image stuck, as they were older drivers and younger people couldn't afford them," said Mrs Judd, 64, of North Haven.

Mrs Judd, now retired, and husband Barry have owned Volvos since the 1970s and have never looked back.

"My husband was a truck driver and saw a bad accident. The people driving the Volvo walked away but the others didn't," Mrs Judd said of Volvo's legendary safety features.

"He came home that night and said 'we're getting rid of the Statesman and buying a Volvo'."

The family was so impressed with the car they kept an old Volvo especially for her grand-daughter, Jessica Judd-Ireland, 16.

"That was her mother's older car, we've had it for a couple of years waiting for her to get her Ls," she said.

Volvo mechanic Chris Allen, 32, of Salisbury, said he believed Volvo's inclusion in this year's V8 Supercars Championship was already having a positive effect on the brand.

"I'm seeing that trend over the past couple of years with the boxy Volvos I never ever thought would be cool," he said. "I'm seeing young kids in their 20s driving these retro cool Volvos."

Volvo officials say they're in the V8s for the long-haul and want results on the track, not just the showroom.

## YOU'RE THE (ONLY) ONE THAT I WANT... WHY WE LOVE OUR VOLVOS

**NAME:** Helen Judd  
**AGE:** 64  
**OCCUPATION:** Retired  
**SUBURB:** North Haven

■ **How did you end up driving a Volvo?** My husband was a truck driver and saw a very bad accident, but the people driving the Volvo walked away while the other people didn't.

■ **What do you like about driving a Volvo?** You always feel very secure, like you're in a safety car, and it has all the mod cons.

■ **Do you think Volvo drivers cop an unfair rap?** Yes, they definitely do. I think it is changing as the young ones are getting cars; it is gradually changing, and I hope that with their inclusion in the V8s things will change.

**NAME:** Michael Bennett  
**AGE:** 36  
**OCCUPATION:** Volvo Mechanic  
**SUBURB:** Modbury

■ **How did you end up driving a Volvo?** My parents bought a mechanical business 19 years ago where they were working on Volvos.

■ **What do you like about driving a Volvo?** The quality of the vehicle – people don't know what the vehicles are capable of. They are very good quality, luxurious and underrated cars.

■ **Do you think Volvo drivers cop an unfair rap?** Yes, they are unfairly picked on. People remember the Volvo as a square boxy car with grandma and grandpa, but Volvo has come a long way, especially over the past five years.

**NAME:** Jessica Judd-Ireland  
**AGE:** 16  
**OCCUPATION:** Student  
**SUBURB:** North Haven

■ **How did you end up driving a Volvo?** My parents have always had Volvos and I've got one already for when I get my L-plates.

■ **What do you like about driving a Volvo?** I haven't driven one yet but I think they're really safe cars.

■ **Do you think Volvo drivers cop an unfair rap?** They definitely do. Some of my friends who have only just started driving have Volvos and they like them because they're really safe cars. Not everyone who drives a Volvo is old – a lot of younger people are starting to drive them too.

**NAME:** David Mahar  
**AGE:** 65  
**OCCUPATION:** Farmer/semi-retired  
**SUBURB:** Hindmarsh Island

■ **How did you end up driving a Volvo?** Many years ago we bought a Volvo for our mother. It was a good, solid typical Swedish car. I'd always been a Holden driver and when it came time to change the Holden over, I took a Volvo for a drive and bought it.

■ **What do you like about driving a Volvo?** They're safe, hold the road beautifully and they're very comfortable.

■ **Do you think Volvo drivers cop an unfair rap?** No, not these days. If you were a bloke, you wore a hat, had a beard and smoked a pipe, you had a Volvo. They've come a long way since.

## OFFICIAL 2014 CLIPSAL 500 PROGRAM



AVAILABLE AT  
THE TRACK AND  
NEWSAGENTS

V8 FOREIGN  
DRIVER  
PROFILES,  
TRACK MAP  
AND ALL THE  
LATEST NEWS

Advertiser.com.au



# Volvo revamps old boxy image as it prepares to race in Clipsal 500

KATRINA STOKES THE ADVERTISER FEBRUARY 27, 2014 10:01PM

4

SHARE

YOUR FRIENDS' ACTIVITY

**NEW!** Discover news with your friends. Give it a try.

To get going, simply connect with your favourite social network:

Ads By Google

**70% Off Business Class** [www.alphaflightguru.com](http://www.alphaflightguru.com)

We Have Special Discounts to Get You 70% Off Business Class Tickets.



RACE RIVALS: Volvo drivers Robert Dahlgren and Scott McLaughlin with grid girls Jacinta and Tess, and the Clipsal 2013 champions, Holdens Jamie Whincup and Craig Lowndes. Picture: SARAH REED. Source: News Corp Australia

- [\*\*SUPERSITE: Latest Clipsal news, previews, teams\*\*](#)
- [\*\*Whincup, Lowndes face-off at Lofty\*\*](#)
- [\*\*Clipsals biggest V8 moments\*\*](#)

**VOLVO** drivers have been the butt of all car jokes throughout the years, with the stereotypical driver usually being an erratic elderly motorist who sits behind the wheel of boxy, old-fashioned cars.

Enter the Volvo of today — sleek, sophisticated looking vehicles set to swap paint with the best of them in the V8 Supercars Championship, which started in Adelaide on Thursday.

After a 15 year hiatus from the Australian motorsport scene, the Swedish car manufacturer is back Down Under attracting a legion of new fans.

It is the fifth brand to join the might of Ford and Holden and comes a year after Nissan and Mercedes made their bid for top spot on the racing car scoreboard.

So, has the famous Scandinavian car manufacturer changed with the times or are they still stuck in the past?

The man behind the Volvo Polestar Racing team, Garry Rogers, of Garry Rogers Motorsport, admitted he's copped a few Volvo jokes since joining the team.



Jessica Judd-Ireland, right, with grandmother Helen Judd and their Volvos. Helen is vice-president of the Volvo Car Club of SA and owns three Volvos. Picture: Dean Martin.

“People ring us and say ‘have you got your bowls hat on, you got your tweed jacket, where’s your desert boots and are you going to go and play with the old ladies in the park today?,” he said yesterday from the pits as he prepared for his inaugural race in Adelaide.

“All those jokes — I love it, bring it on.”

Mr Rogers, who switched from racing Holden Commodores, said the new S60 sedan was nothing like the Volvos of the past.

“I’m a bodgie at heart — I love tattoos, I love fast cars, I love all that sort of activity and I drive an S60 Volvo,” he said, of his completely opposite characteristics to the “typical” Volvo driver.

“Ok, I am given one (a Volvo) but I’ve driven a lot of good sports cars and it is a great car.”





Fifteen years on the streets of Adelaide have produced some classic clashes and hair-raising moments. Relive the top five here ahead of the

Autoplay

The 68-year-old said he believed Volvo's entry into the V8s was bringing a "new breed" of fans to Australian car racing.

"There (seems to be) a lot of older people that I've not seen at the races before coming along ... they are interested and they are keen and that's what we need, more supporters," he said.

Smart, visually appealing and safe are just some of the features Mr Rogers is pleased with in the "superbly built" cars.

And Volvo's re-entry into Australian motorsports seems to be paying dividends.

Since the car manufacturer announced they would be back on the starting grid this year, Volvo's has experienced plenty of interest in the new S60 sedan — the road-going cousin drivers Scott McLaughlin and Robert Dahlgren will drive on the track on Friday.

## VOLVO V8 SUPERCAR DRIVERS

Volvo Australia marketing and communications director Oliver Peagam said the designs of modern day Volvos were “far removed from the old, boxy image” of the cars from decades ago.

He said the manufacturer’s entry into the premier car race would continue to show potential buyers the “Volvo (of) today is nothing like Volvo in the past”.

It is the first time since the 1980s the car manufacturer has competed in the competition.

“Every European luxury car brand has significant performance and motorsport credentials in their line-up and history and we are no different having won Australia’s greatest race, the Bathurst 1000, back in 1988 and the Australian Touring Car Championship in 1986 beating a number of local and European luxury car brands on the way,” Mr Peagam said.

“By entering Australia’s top tier motorsport category ... we believe this will contribute to the fast-changing perception of the S60 model and the wider Volvo brand.”

Volvo Car Club of South Australia vice-president Helen Judd said she believed Volvo’s image first originated from the “mostly older people with a bit of money” who used to buy the cars.

“That’s how the image stuck because they were older drivers (and) younger people couldn’t afford them,” said Mrs Judd, 64, of North Haven.

Mrs Judd, who is now retired, and her husband Barry have owned Volvos since the 1970s and they’ve never looked back.

“My husband was a truck driver and he’d seen a very bad accident but the people driving the Volvo walked away but the other people didn’t,” Mrs Judd said, of the car’s well known safety features.

“He came home that night and said ‘we’re getting rid of the Statesman and getting a Volvo’.”

Mrs Judd said the family was so impressed with the car manufacturer they kept an old Volvo especially for her grand-daughter Jessica Judd-Ireland, 16.

“That was her mother’s older car ... we’ve had it for a couple of years waiting for her to get her Learners,” she said.

Volvo mechanic Chris Allen, 32, of Salisbury, said he believed Volvo’s inclusion in this year’s V8 Supercars Championship was already having a positive effect on the manufacturer.

“I’m already seeing that trend now over the last couple of years with the boxy Volvos that I never ever thought would be cool,” he said.

“I’m seeing young kids in their 20s coming in and driving these retro cool Volvos.”

Volvo officials say they are in V8 competition for the long-haul and want results on the race track and not just in the showroom.