

Manawatu Car Club Inc

MAGAZINE

MARCH 2017



Something for Everyone

EDITORSPEAK...

Isn't it interesting to see how the TRS series is so highly rated internationally, yet it somehow doesn't seem to carry the same mana in New Zealand? Why is that?

I have just been reading of Lance Stroll's forthcoming season with the Williams F1 team, and special mention was made (by the internationally acclaimed writer of the article) of the titles he has won in the last couple of years, including the TRS title. This, the writer, regarded as the most high pressure series currently raced anywhere in the world, with the need to be constantly on your game both in a driving sense, and more importantly, mentally, as the duration of the series is so short and the racing so intense. The "pressure cooker" atmosphere is an excellent test of strength of character and commitment, something that most professional sportspeople now recognize is as important as any physical attributes their chosen sport requires. And the fact that the series is raced in the northern hemisphere winter means more actual car time for those aspiring young drivers, rather than "racing" a simulator.



I believe the Series is well regarded within the sport here, for exactly what it is, a training ground, however I believe that there is a genuine lack of publicity/interest within the mainstream media, and thus the general public have no idea of its standing in a global sense. A far cry from the days when I remember racing home from my paper round to watch the live coverage of the NZ Grand Prix on TV. The summer race series went from a (very competitive) holiday jaunt for the top European drivers to a hotly contested competition for up and coming drivers around the time that Formula Pacific was introduced, and we have been fortunate to see many embryonic stars in the making racing here. Perhaps it is that very change in the nature of the Series that makes it harder to both promote, and to gain mainstream attention, when there are no longer any "name" drivers racing, regardless of the

importance it has played in the early careers of so many.

This month sees the last of my "Confessions" series, as I have run out of photos!! A shift from spectator to flag marshal, and later crash rescue, at Manfeild severely limited my ability to take photos, however it is worth noting the caliber of later winners of the International Series - names such as Roberto Moreno, Ross Cheever, Mike Thackwell, Paul Radisich and Craig Baird amongst others.

I recall walking into a British circuit some years ago just as an unsilenced Ferrari 312 Formula One car began circulating, and literally feeling the hairs on the back of my neck stand up. The same thing happens on the Isle of Man as you listen to the bikes revs rise and fall at almost 200 mph. The sound of the full field of F5000 cars bouncing off the old back straight fence at Manfeild did it. The sight of Moto GP bikes passing and repassing with millimeters to spare and teetering on the edge of tyre adhesion does it. Please Liberty Media, current owners of F1, please bring back something to modern F1 that does the same. I gave up watching years ago when the driver became a secondary component to the cars aero package and the team strategists back at their base, and was forced to use artificial aids just to pass another car. Don't get me wrong, I still admire the balls it takes to drive the current cars, just as I admire the technology in the cars, however there is so much wrong with the current situation. I certainly hope that Ross Brawn is allowed a free hand, for he has a keen understanding of the SPORT from all perspectives, as well as a fine business mind. I recall Keith Duckworth (the "worth" of Cosworth) proposing a solution many years ago. Give the teams a certain basic dimensional and aero package the cars must conform to. Specify wheel sizes. Specify a fuel flow rate and maximum fuel tank size. Everything else is free. Stand back and watch the genuine innovators make the most of the freedom thus given. It sure would make for an interesting range of cars and interesting engine configurations. Forget hybrids and electric, let WEC and Formula E go down that path and let F1 redefine the internal combustion engine.

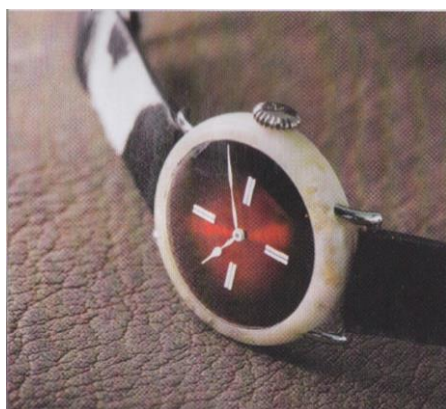
Sadly I wasn't able to get to the Grand Prix meeting, however as a consolation we took in the Ellerslie Classic Car Show and Concours. It's been a few years since I have been, and the range of cars on show was outstanding. Everything from a curved dash Oldsmobile and other veterans to the very

latest Maserati and Lamborghini models. In between were some really interesting cars, including a Matra Djet under restoration (I never knew there were any in NZ), a wonderful Austin Seven racer, a Mini Cooper with Downton head and twin 45's, a great display of Trekka's, a replica Sunbeam Lotus rally car under construction, several lovely old Skoda's, a number of lovely Packards and even my old Lotus Europa. I spent some time talking to the current owner who regularly drives it and is treating it to a gradual rolling restoration. Great to see it being appreciated.

As I also missed the AGM and with the way the timing of the magazine worked, I'd like to say welcome to the newest Committee members. You have had the bar set high for you!! It is great to see the enthusiasm and commitment shown by all the Committee, who have literally turned the club around in 3 short years. As a club we are now financially stable; able to maintain and improve our assets; we run some fantastic events and manage others; we communicate clearly with our members and other stakeholders; and we have a much more open and collaborative relationship with Manfeild and the Manfeild Board. Our membership is once more on the rise as others realise what we have to offer, and, well... it's a remarkable achievement. The club was once one of THE clubs to belong to – and it is again. Like I said, a lot to live up to!!

As an interesting non motoring, aside, Swiss watch manufacturer H Moser, well known for its high end watches, has made a remarkable protest piece following new regulations from the Swiss government.

This allows for the R&D costs to be included in the 60% of the value of the watch that must be made in Switzerland



in order for it to be labelled Swiss made (so in theory a watch could actually be built anywhere in the world and still qualify for the desirable label). Their one off watch was built to emphasise the companies Swissness and features a red fume dial, a Swiss cowhide leather strap and a case made of Vacherin Mont d'Or Swiss cheese (admittedly in a

resin for durability). And who said the Swiss don't have a sense of humour!!

Interesting to note the recent sale of Alfa Romeo Tipo B P3 50006, which was built for the 1934 season and raced in the Enzo Ferrari run Alfa team in both 1934 and 35. This car was number 6 of 7 built and built to the new "widebody" regs of the time. It was predominantly raced by Louis Chiron in period. The car came to New Zealand in 1953 when John McMillan imported it to race in the 1954 NZGP. It was later owned by Ernie Sprague and Bill Harris (who fitted a 3.8 Jaguar motor) before being



rescued by Leon Witte and restored back to original. With a twin supercharged straight eight running on methanol, these cars were among the first "proper" single seat race cars and are still very competitive in historic racing. Chassis 50006 came with a correct period engine, but is currently running a modern replica motor. The price a cool \$3,920,000 Euro – about NZ\$6,000,000. I bet there are a few previous owners who "wish I had kept that one "!!



Keep the rubber side down.

Trevor

Email Trevor at littlebarton@actrix.gen.nz

MCC COMMITTEE MEMBERS



President: Richie Arber - 027 2900 668



Vice President: Tim Wilde - 0274 729 664

Secretary: Jeff Braid - 027 477 3337

Your Committee:



Jeff Braid



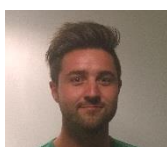
Noel Beale



Jill Hogg



Graeme Bretherton



Jaron Olivecrona



Greg Brown



Gareth Stanley



Aaron Walker



Kerry Halligan



Simon Barry

Patrons: Fordy Farland ~~Deceased~~, Fred Parker ~~Deceased~~, Robert Lester, Stan Turner, Terry Rush, Russell Harris.

Life Members: Steve Bond, Brian Davies, Dave Hayward, Sir Pat Higgins, Robert Lester, Wendy Lester, Vern Marshall, Warren Masters, Marion Prisk, Terry Rush, Murray Starnes, Trevor Weir, Alan White, Stan Turner, Raymond Bennett.

Archivists: Terry Rush, Geoff Boyden, Russell Harris

Editor: Trevor Weir

“Track & Yak”

Time: 7pm to 9pm

Date: Tuesday 14th March 2017.

Place: **Rose and Crown Olde English Pub**

– Terrace End Carpark, Palmerston North

Why not join us!

**Feel free to bring your husband, wife,
partner or friend along.**

Race Licences

We now have 5 licence examiners within the
Manawatu, these people are:

Richie Arber	027 290 0668
Danny McKenna	027 240 1291
Jeff Braid	027 477 3337
Dennis Martin	021 216 5815
Peter Edmond	06 326 9741

For your race licence or renewal please contact any
one of the above who are keen to get you out on the
track.

FROM THE PRESIDENTS PEN...

Congrats Guys and Girls... If you didn't already know the NZGP meeting was again run by the Manawatu Car Club and its great team of volunteers. The whole weekend went off with the precision of a Swiss Watch and the feedback from the stewards and the drivers was nothing but positive, in fact the comment "this was the best run meeting by far (for this series)" was conveyed to me more than once over the weekend. Some might say that I harp on about the importance of our volunteers, but it is a simple equation, no volunteers, no racing... We want to show how much we appreciate our volunteers so at the Mitre 10 Mega Summer Race Series Prize Giving on the 8th April we will be presenting some special volunteer awards. See the advertisement later in this magazine to see how to book your seat at this great event.

The NZGP weekend was a full on petrolheads paradise with a great mix of cars competing, if you didn't get a buzz out of that weekend, check ya pulse because more than likely you are dead! One thing got my pulse racing over the weekend, no not the grid girls, but the chance to meet two of the greatest racers ever, and also the nicest gentlemen you can ever meet. I am talking of course about Jacky Ickx and Allan Moffat. I was lucky enough to be in the Manfeild suite when they were both in there and spent around an hour talking to each of them, to say they are a couple of characters is an understatement, the stories that were told left the hairs on the back of your neck standing up! We have kept in touch with Allan and his minder, Phil Grant, since their return to Australia and the hope is that we can get Allan back over to be a guest speaker at a dinner we will put on... fingers crossed!!!

My wife Lydia got on well with both Allan and Jacky, they had certainly not lost any of their charm I tell you, both were very smooth when it came to having a conversation with the ladies. Allan in particular spent a great amount of time talking with Lydia about racing and the trials and tribulations of being a race car driver in the early years. Lydia asked Allan towards the end of the conversation is she could get her husband to take a photograph of them both, Allan put his arm around her and cheekily said "so where is your husband" to which Lydia replied "right here" (I had been standing with them talking the whole time but we had not introduced ourselves as husband and wife, merely as Richie and Lydia from the Manawatu Car Club), Allan said "oh..." and we all just laughed... Obviously Allan thought I was punching above my weight as well! The photo below and the Manawatu Car Club got a mention on Allan's official Facebook page as well which was a delight to see.





Allan and Jacky going over some old photos.



Another funny story, although not related to the NZGP. Russell Harris and I usually have a catch up quite a few times a week, it is just to make sure Russell is behaving more than anything, and during one of our catch ups after the recent team champs Russell told me a story of how he had finally “made it”. He was leaving the showgrounds and a group of young adults were walking towards him, Russell in his usual manner said “good evening” as the group passed by him, a second later one of the girls in the group turned and ran back to Russell asking “are you Russell Harris?”, to which Russell said “yes I am”, the girl then proceeded to undo her jacket to show Russell her T-Shirt which had on it “I love Russell Harris”. You have truly made it my friend when people start wearing a T-Shirt with your name on it.



We have had a couple of calls from novice drivers asking for information on how they go from doing single sprint / dual sprints to doing the Winter and Summer Series race meetings. We have also had a couple of people call up and ask how they get into racing in the first place. So we have been thinking about putting on a night at the clubrooms that covers everything you need to know about getting into racing in the first instance and then moving up into a race series. We would also run through some important need to know rules and regulations to do with not only the drivers, but the cars themselves. If you would like to be a part of this workshop, or know someone who might be interested in getting involved in Motorsport then please give me a call – 027-2900-668 or drop me an email – richie@trgroup.co.nz and we will set about making this happen. We are also looking for some “buddy’s”, that is experienced racers that would be willing to buddy up with a novice driver to help them learn the ropes. We can all remember our first race meeting and how daunting the day was and how much nicer it would have been if we had someone experienced to help us out. If you think this is something that you could be interested in please call or email me.

Richie

PROJECTS AND CLUBROOMS...

Over the Xmas / New Year's break the clubrooms themselves and the surrounding fences got a much needed waterblast and then the existing fences had another coat of paint put on them and the newly built front fence had a good two coats put on it. The day was rather windy so we had to have a spotter in place for the front fence to tell the painter, who was using an airless sprayer, to halt every time a vehicle approached otherwise there may have been a few annoyed drivers. The fences came up mint and when the paint had dried the new Manawatu Car Club sign was put on the front fence and various other H&S signs were put up around the place.



Front Fence



Driveway Fence



Retaining Wall and Back Fence



**YOUR BEST CHOICE
IN WASTE SERVICES**

0800 240 120 | www.envirowaste.co.nz

Residential Waste

Commercial Waste

Special Waste

Recycling Services



We have also made a start on the Archives Room. Warren Dunn (long-time MCC Member) and owner of “eHaus” came and viewed the room and also the outside walls of the room, and it was quickly established that the outside linings were stuffed and needed replacing. The linings, when put up originally, never covered the bottom plate of the frame work so when it rained on that wall the water was getting in under the bottom plate which was the cause of the dampness inside the room. So Warren and his team set about stripping all of the wall linings both inside and outside and have replaced all of outside linings with board and batten, which looks very good indeed.



East side wall facing the road



South side wall down the driveway

Jonathan Hogg (again long-time MCC Member) and owner of Max Tarr Electrical, organised for one of his guys to come over once the inside was stripped and redo all of the wiring in the room and strip out what was no longer necessary or needed. So now Warren and his team will come back in and line the interior walls of the Archives Room so that we can go about setting it up to store some very important Trophies and other memorabilia. Both of these jobs were done at well below “mates rates” and Warren would like to say a special thanks to PlaceMakers P.Nth for donating all of the materials used to line the exterior and interior of the Archives Room.

Thank you Warren and Jonathan for helping us out with this very important room that will house much of the Manawatu Car Club’s history for years to come.

maxtarr
ELECTRICAL

eHaus ™
design for sustainable living

Join the Army – Arber’s Army.

A huge thank you to the eight people who either called me or emailed me to say that they could help out with projects at the clubrooms. Once the interior of the Archives room is lined we will be organizing a day where we will finish off the exterior painting of the clubrooms, which will include painting the new board and batten exterior cladding and interior lining of the Archives Room.

If you think you might be able to help out with a few odd jobs over the coming year, call me or email me to let me know you would like to be a part of making a difference for your club – phone Richie Arber on 027-2900-668 or by email richie.arber@trgroup.co.nz

I look forward to hearing from you soon!!!

The Manawatu Motor Show is back...

Yesthat’s correct, after more than a decade in hiatus the Manawatu Motor Show is back again on Sunday the 2nd April at the Palmerston North Showground’s carpark.

The previous shows were always undercover but the endless increases in costs saw the event become unviable in that format. So it’s now outdoors in what is hoped to be a “settled weather “time of year.

The Show is open to all to display their vehicles, we want your truck, tank, classic, motorcycle, competition vehicle, car, motorized bar stool, drifter or hot rod. Being petrol heads if it makes a proper noise when it fires up we want it.

It’s free to display your vehicle. Each vehicle entering gets an entry pass, if you need more than one pass bring another vehicle!!!

Displaying the vehicle you are proud of is what we are about. Displaying also gives you a golden opportunity to network either with members of your own club or the public and additionally you get the chance of someone saying “I know someone who has one of those in a barn” or “I have parts for one of those” or “I want to buy your vehicle”. The Show is not a swap meet and never will be but if you can help yourself or your club by arranging to buy or sell vehicles or parts or get members for your club, fill your boots!!!

For your information we will be charging the public \$5 per head or \$10 a family to enter. This money will be used for advertising and trophies so please spread the word, a great attendance this year will result in more trophies next year.

For an entry form, or if you have any questions or queries, please contact:

Chris – (06) 358 5894

Murray – 027 448 3333

Or email manawatumotorshow@hotmail.com



PRIZE GIVING DINNER WE WANT YOU TO ATTEND!

**The Mitre 10 Mega Summer Race Series Prize Giving is to be held at the
MCC Clubrooms - 120 Kawa Kawa Road Feilding.**

**Join us to celebrate our Summer Series winners and the presentation of
the special Volunteers Awards.**

- Date: Saturday 8th April
- Time: 6.00pm for pre-dinner Drinks & Nibbles
- This is a 2 course Dinner Evening (not pot luck)
 - Cost is \$25.00 incl GST per person
- It is BYO Drinks only, everything else is provided
- Please contact Richie to reserve your seat now
- Payment will be on the night – Cash, Eftpos, Credit Card
- Phone Richie: 027 290 0668 or email: richie@trgroup.co.nz
 - Numbers are limited so get in now!

**We request all Winners and Place-getters for each of the race classes
attend, you will know who you are at the end of Round 3 on the 2nd April –
Richie will also contact you during the week leading up to the Prize Giving.**

**THIS IS A NIGHT NOT TO BE MISSED.
COME DINE, CELEBRATE AND SOCIALISE WITH US.**

No Cooking required!

MCC CLUB MEMBER OF THE MONTH...

(Every month we will bring you a profile on one of Club Members)

NAME: Warren Dunn

BORN: A long time ago

OCCUPATION: Builder

RACE CAR: 1987 E30 M3 (evolution 1)

EVERYDAY DRIVE CAR: Nissan Navara / Toyota Hiace

DREAM CAR:

Would eventually love to own a genuine Group A, M3 for the track – a nice Porsche for weekends.



YOUR BEST MOMENT IN MOTORSPORT?

Not too many of late, however the last five years running in the Historic Touring Cars has given me a chance to meet and compete against some world class drivers and cars. Also, I did feel pretty good passing Jim Richards on the inside at turn one Hampton Downs.

WHAT DID YOU WANT TO BE WHEN YOU GREW UP AND WHY?

Originally a Policeman however during high school I developed a passion for working with wood and became interested in old homes. Hence becoming a builder for the last 35 years.

IF YOU COULD INVITE THREE PEOPLE TO DINNER, DEAD OR ALIVE, WHO WOULD THEY BE?

1. My dad, who passed when I was a teenager, so he could meet my wife, daughters, granddaughter and friends. He loved children.
2. Denny Hulme
3. John Key.... Or Sharon Stone

WHO WOULD YOU PLAY IN A MOVIE?

Not a movie, but hands down 'Tim (the Toolman Taylor) Allen' in the sitcom Home Improvements. A larrikin but skilled and serious at heart.

THREE WORDS THAT BEST DESCRIBE YOU...

Workaholic – Generous - Passionate

IF YOU WERE A VEHICLE, WHAT WOULD IT BE, AND WHY?

Land Cruiser 70 Series - no frills, pricey but basic, doesn't give up without a fight, has hidden sophistication

WHAT IS YOUR SECRET VICE?

Coffee, port and animated kids films. Takes your mind off things

PEOPLE WOULD BE SURPRISED TO KNOW THAT...

That I have 5 sisters and 4 brothers

And that I have employed/ trained 26 apprentices during my building career.

FAVOURITE QUOTE...

I have two really, the first being: "Aim at nothing – hit nothing" and "better to have tried and failed than not tried at all.

MITRE 10
MEGA

MITRE 10 MEGA Summer Series

THREE-ROUND CLUB RACE SERIES

R1 Manfeild **18th Dec 2016**

R2 Taupo **22nd Jan 2017**

R3 Manfeild **Apr 2nd 2017**



Stew Wood Photography

FREE SPECTATOR ADMISSION!

Classes: GT Cup, IB Cup, SF Cup,
RS Cup, Classics

Entry Fee: \$220

Transponder hire: \$20

Supplementary Regs and Entry Forms at:
www.manawatucarclub.org.nz

ORGANISER

Jeff Braid, Secretary
Manawatu Car Club Inc
027 477 3337
manawatucarclub@extra.co.nz
www.manawatucarclub.org.nz



Manawatu Car Club



The Manawatu. Petrol head paradise. February was a big month for motorsport fans. It began with the ENZED Superstock Teams Championships at Central Energy Trust Arena, full houses both nights for the country's biggest speedway event. The following weekend the 62nd New Zealand Grand Prix meeting was staged at Manfeild Circuit Chris Amon with a healthy increase in spectator numbers. Move forward another seven days and there was Kart Sport Manawatu's Trans-Tasman Challenge meeting at the Manawatu Toyota Raceway in Shirriffs Road. But February wasn't just for rev-heads, there was also the final pre-season NRL match for the Warriors against the Gold Coast Titans at the Central Energy Trust Arena that drew a very large (8,000 +) and vociferous crowd. But wait, there's more. There was the two-day Air Tattoo at Base Ohakea that celebrated 80 years of the RNZAF, an event that drew overseas military aircraft from Australia, Britain, Singapore, Japan, Canada and the United States, along with tens of thousands of spectators. All these events enjoyed very good weather, collectively, they were outstanding news for the region's economy...

An opportunity lost. When Bruce Robertson created the Superstock Team Championships in 1981 things were



very different. Up to that point there was the New Zealand Stockcar Teams Championship in which the winners hosted the following year's event, Bruce's concept was basically the same, but with the more powerful and faster Superstocks that were relatively new to the sport. The idea was put forward, but remarkably no other promoter showed interest, so he ran it himself on an annual basis in Palmerston North. It soon became the biggest event on the New Zealand Speedway calendar, with fans coming from all points of the globe, year after year, booking at the same motel. The economic benefits for the city and region are massive, and it began with an

idea that no one else wanted to know about. Is HINDSIGHT the best word in the Oxford Dictionary...

In the second round of the Mitre 10 Mega Summer Series at the Taupo circuit there was a close encounter between two members of the Manawatu Car Club. Unfortunately it was little bit too close. The wet conditions made life very difficult for those behind the wheel and there were the inevitable incidents that resulted in panel damage, some minor, and one that was rather more than minor. The latter involved Samantha Stanley and Oliver Edmond. At least Super Sam was able to salvage the Honda's engine and drive train, unfortunately the rest of the car was only fit for a skip bin...

Viva le France. There was great delight in one camp at Taupo when Monsieur Arber crossed the finish line in a podium placing driving Mrs A's Peugeot 206. Captain Pugnatious has certainly got the little froggie percolating and will be chasing a long overdue win when the Mitre 10 Mega Summer Series circus is back at his home track on Sunday 02 April for the final round. He insists there is no truth in rumours that when he wins a race the Tricolour will be raised to the playing of La Marseillaise each morning at the Presidential Palace. The symbol of France is the cockerel, or cock for short, a victory would certainly see Richie the Rooster crowing. There is also no truth in rumours that to make himself sound more Parisian he's watching replays of the popular television programme 'ello 'ello...



Big let-down. The Taupo Historic GP meeting at the end of January over promised and under delivered. In the Historic Touring Car a number of the cars listed in the programme failed to make the grid, but the field did include Gianfranco Brancatelli who drove Peter Sturgeon's BMW M3, the car the Italian raced in the 1987 Nissan Mobil 500 series. It was a similar story with the 3-litre Formula 1 cars from the 1970s who were billed as the headline act. The main compensation came from the fact there was a very big field of Formula 5000s (26 listed) supported by Historic Formula Juniors (48 listed) and Historic Formula Fords (25 listed). The F5000s certainly didn't disappoint but the meeting's highlight was the "Race of Champions" that brought the F1 and F5000 cars together. Ticket prices were high (\$170 grandstand for both days) and the crowd sparse, but those attending did hear the sound of the Ford Cosworth DFV V8 engine that met with extraordinary success after making a winning debut in Jim Clark's Lotus 49 at the 1967 Dutch Grand Prix. The event may have had its disappointments but there was no shortage of nostalgia...



Family recognition. With the Taupo track having been renamed the Bruce McLaren Motorsport Park in November 2015 it was appropriate that Bruce's daughter Amanda drove a series of demonstration laps of the circuit during the course of the meeting. The car used was Warwick Mortimer's magnificent 1971 McLaren M8 CanAm sports racer, probably not the ideal choice with an 8.3 litre engine pumping out 850 horsepower!! It sounded like the big orange beast was in first gear at low revs with the motor not enjoying the experience. A current McLaren road car may have been a better choice...



MCC colours in 2017 Liqui-Moly Bathurst 12 Hour race. In the fifty-two car field were 14 New Zealand drivers, including Chris Pither. Ten retired, Chris finished. Our man was co-driving a Wall Racing Nissan GT-R Nismo GT3 with Daniel Bilski (Hong Kong) and Adrian Flack (Australia), the trio qualifying 24th on the grid with a best lap of 2m 05.041 secs, the pole time was 2.03.737. The car completed 200 laps after spending considerable time in the pits, the multi-national drivers placing 31st in the overall classification with 32 cars being confirmed finishers. Daniel Gaunt (Audi R8 LMS) was the highest placed kiwi pedaller in 7th place, Simon Evans (Audi R8 LMS) 11th and Steven Richards (BMW M6 GT3) 14th. There was also a semi-Pither link to the second placed Porsche 911 GT3 R, the car carried sponsorship from Chris's long time backers "Ice Break"...

One serious motor race. The Liqui-Moly 12 Hour goes from strength-to-strength every year with top teams and drivers drawn to the daunting Mount Panorama circuit. This year's race drew a record entry with Audi, BMW, Nissan, Mercedes AMG and McLaren all entering works supported cars while the Bentley Continentals were a full factory run team. At various points throughout the race there were seven different race leaders across six different brands which underlines how competitive the racing was. This event is now right up there with best of them, and deserves to be...



Dream team failed. Much of the pre-race the talk was all about the awesome foursome and their Castrol/Vodafone backed BMW M6 GT3. Bathurst legends Mark Scaife, Russell Ingall and Tony Longhurst were joined by ex-F1 driver Timo Glock. The car was strong in the early stages but their race was over on lap 135 when Ingall made a mistake and crashed at The Dipper. The highly fancied M6 Bimmers were quick, Chaz Mostert posted a 2.02.954 lap, a time only beaten by the winning Ferrari's 2.02.905 (both set on lap 18), but his race also ended prematurely, completing two more laps than the sister car. Maybe next year...



It could have been a photo finish. Over the three previous years the collective winning margins in the Bathurst 12 Hour totalled under 4 seconds, but the 2017 result was clear cut. Starting from pole position, the Maranello Motorsport Ferrari 488 GT3 driven by Craig Lowndes, Jamie Whincup and Toni Vilander finished a full lap ahead of a Porsche 991 GT3 R and a Bentley Continental GT3 that were separated by 18 seconds. For the final two hours it was effectively a two-man duel between Whincup and his Triple Eight Supercar team mate and defending 12 Hour champion Shane van Gisbergen in a Mercedes AMG GT3. The pair made contact several times before the Ferrari took the lead for the final time when Whincup made a bold move on Conrod Straight with two wheels on the grass at 280 km/h!! From that point it was game on as the pair raced bumper-to-bumper, but with 20 minutes to go van Gisbergen lost control in The Dipper, hit the concrete wall and it was game over, a disappointing end to the race for the kiwi champion and co-drivers Craig Baird and Maro Engel. It was the second Bathurst 12 Hour win for both Ferrari and Craig Lowndes following their victory three years earlier, and there's no doubt that the 2018 race will be eagerly awaited. Redemption time for 'The Giz'...



Revealed. MCC member Fabian Coulthard and his new team mate Scott McLaughlin were the first to unveil their new racer for the 2017 Virgin Australia Supercar Championship. The DJR-Team Penske Falcons look sensational in Shell-V Power livery, if they go as well as they look they will be podium finishers, and hopefully on the top step. The kiwi pair tested their cars on 21 February at the Queensland Raceway in preparation for the traditional opening round, the Clipsal 500 in Adelaide on 04/05 March. It's also been confirmed that Frenchman Alex Premat will partner

McLaughlin in the endurance races with Tony D'Alberto sharing driving duties with Coulthard. The team's other big acquisition is another high-profile Frenchman, Ludo Lacroix, the brilliant engineer who has been lured from Triple Eight. Is this the new super team...

Not quite down and out. Chris Pither has been thrown a V8 Supercar lifeline, albeit a short one. The MCC driver has secured a seat for the Sandown 500, Gold Coast 600 and Bathurst 1000 endurance races driving for Team Erebus Motorsport. Chris will share the Erebus Commodore with David Wall, a reunion of sorts as the two drivers have been teamed together in the past. In 2012 and 2013 they shared the Britek Motorsport Commodore, and in 2015 were driving partners in a Gary Rogers Motorsport Volvo S60. Last season Wall was paired with Scott McLaughlin in the GRM S60 for the 4-round Pirtek Enduro Cup and was very impressive, it could be an ANZAC pairing worth following...

Crystal baller got it right. As predicted by prominent MNZ Official Craig Finlayson after the opening round, Liam Lawson dominated the Formula 1600 class, the 15 year old becoming the youngest driver to win the Formula

Ford/Formula 1600 Championship. Driving a French Mygale chassis, Liam went into final round at Manfeild's NZGP meeting with a lead of 110 points with a maximum 121 points on offer - he had a perfect finish to the championship by winning all three races at Circuit Chris Amon to complete the series with 14 wins and a very close second place. Now the Pukekohe youngster has the chance to participate in an international shootout with a very big prize for the winner, a US\$200,000 supported drive in next year's Cooper Tires US Formula 2000 Championship. Lawson's rise is another MCC Winter Series success story...

Legends meet. Twice during the course of the NZGP meeting, MCC Central Muscle Car veteran Ian Easton was working on his Ford Mustang in the pit area when he was visited by motor racing legends from the other side of the Tasman. The first was 74 year old Queenslander Rusty French who still races in the Australian Touring Car Masters series driving a 1970 Ford Mustang, so the pair immediately had a common link. French's endurance career began in 1960, competing in the Phillip Island 500 with the great Norm Beechey as his co-driver, the pair finishing 5th overall and second in class driving what most would consider an unlikely contender, a Standard Vanguard. Later French won the 1969 Sandown 3 Hour sharing a Ford Falcon GTHO Phase 1 with Allan Moffatt and the 1981 Bathurst 1000 with Dick Johnson in the # 17 Palmer Tube Mills Ford XD Falcon. The next arrival at the Easton camp was none other than the incomparable Allan Moffatt himself, a 4-time Bathurst 1000 winner and a man who knows a good Mustang when he sees one. The Canadian/Australian recorded an extraordinary one hundred and one championship race victories in his iconic Team Coca Cola (later Brut) AMR TransAm Boss 302 Ford Mustang during the early 1970's on both sides of the Tasman. Did they offer any advice? Only Jack Jack knows the answer to that...



Only for the privileged. Not surprisingly the Lexus brand featured very prominently during the Castrol TRS Championship Series, there was more Lexi than you could poke a stick at. The flagship and global icon of the Lexus range is the sensational \$1 million 'FLA' super car, only 500 were produced and the example in this



country is build number 496. Powered by a front mid-mounted 4.8 litre V10 the 'FLA' is a Usain Bolt out of the starting blocks, 0-100 k's in 3.5 seconds, thanks to the 412 kW (560 bhp) output at an impressive 8,700 rpm. The pilot for the for the lunch-time hot lap rides was ex-TRS driver Nick Cassidy, for the selected few it would have been the fastest taxi ride of their lives, and there was no meter running...

Nice comment. Nick Cassidy won the New Zealand Grand Prix three times, all at Manfeild. In the 2017 NZGP Programme he described Circuit Chris Amon as one of his favourite New Zealand circuits and in his analysis of a lap of the track goes on to say, "The FINAL CORNER is my favourite corner in the country - long, fast and difficult". Most drivers at all levels of racing would probably agree with the final word. Last year the 22 year old Aucklanders finished fourth in the highly competitive European Formula 3 Championship, and there is a very strong Manfeild link to his circuit racing career other than the GP victories in 2012, 2013 and 2014. Moving out of karting and speedway midgets, Nick Cassidy contested the 2008 Manawatu Car Club Winter Series, driving a Formula First under the Sabre Motorsport banner. Twelve races, 3 wins, 9 podiums, champion. It was another success story for Dennis Martin and his team...

Supercars at bargain prices. Late model Ferraris and Lamborghinis. These fake cars are made in Spain and look exactly like the real thing because the moulds for the fibreglass bodies were taken off the real thing. The cars cost the equivalent of NZ\$62,000, so it's an affordable alternative for motor noters, providing they can live with

the instant giveaway, the exhaust note. It's very difficult to replicate the sound of an ultra-high revving V8 or V10 when the donor car is a Toyota Corolla. Olé...

Great plate. Spied, a Ford Mustang with the plate "V8 P51". That may not mean anything to most people but an aviation enthusiast would have picked up on it immediately. The "P51" pays homage to the North American P-51 Mustang, arguably the best fighter aircraft in WWII. Personalised plates have imposed limitations, so this plate is a clever interpretation to identify the car's branding and engine configuration...

Small world. Former Chief Clerk of Course and well known motorsport personality Graeme Robertson is now enjoying retirement. Recently the man known to many as "Robbo" relocated to Hastings. During a conversation with MCC Secretary Jeff Braid the question was asked "Where in Hastings??" The chat progressed to which area, which street and finally which number. Apparently Robbo is living just five doors up the road from where Jeff grew up as a lad. Very small world...

Southern Odyssey. The report on Team Hogg's South Island racing programme can be summed up in two words, "didn't happen". As reported in last month's issue fellow MCC Bimmer driver Warren Dunn had an engine failure at Taupo so cancelled his plans, leaving Jonathan Hogg to carry the famous BMW colours with the impressive CSL Batmobile. The first of the three scheduled meetings was the Skope Classic at Ruapuna on the outskirts of Christchurch. The car was prepped and ready to go, but didn't survive practice, the cause was highly unusual and involved the lining in the fuel tank. The long planned trip did continue, but purely in holiday mode. So disappointing...

Half a century old. A landmark anniversary will be celebrated at the Brands Hatch circuit on 02 July this year, exactly 50 years since the first ever Formula Ford race was held at the England track in 1967. The organisers are hopeful that champions from throughout the category's history will attend the planned "Legends of Brands Hatch" meeting. The inaugural race attracted 20 starters, the winning car was a Lotus 51 driven by Ray Allen. Calculations suggest that world-wide, as many as 500 drivers have won Formula Ford titles over the 50 year



period. The first New Zealand Formula Ford Championship was raced in the 1971/1972 season with David Oxtan claiming the title, and over the past forty-five years only one non-kiwi driver has been crowned champion, Australian Shannon O'Brien in 2004/2005. A number of our current international stars have been past winners - Craig Baird, Scott Dixon, Fabian Coulthard, Shane van Gisbergen and Richie Stanaway, while several Manawatu Car Club members also have their names engraved on the trophy, including Kevin Ingram (82/83), Shane Higgins (86/87) and Sam MacNeill (06/07). It's a formula that can rightly claim to be a global success story...



Taste of success. The Whittakers name has enjoyed a long association with Manfeild, both as competitors and sponsors. In the case of the latter, the annual MG Classic will be run for the 32nd time in November, Whittakers were the initial event naming sponsor, a relationship that continued for many years, in fact, even today many people still refer to the meeting as "The Whittakers". On the track the name is closely associated with the Porsche brand, and members of the family have achieved significant success with the marque. All this leads to asking, did you know

that Whittakers was named New Zealand's most trusted brand in 2012 and has retained the coveted number one position each year since. There's only one thing that tastes better than a piece of Whittakers chocolate, two pieces...



Useless information. SUV phobia is hitting the automotive world, including New Zealand where sales of SUVs have reached record levels. Over recent years luxury car makers have tested the market with varying degrees of success, but it now appears that another major breakthrough has been made. Joining the likes of the Range Rover Sport and the Mercedes-Benz GLC in the mid-size luxury crossover segment, the Porsche Macan and Jaguar F-Pace soon became their brand's most

popular model, now that sector has a new addition from Italy, the Alfa Romeo Stelvio. The famous car maker's first civilian off-roader has an impressive specification with the top-of-the-range Quadrifoglio powered by a Ferrari-developed 2.9 litre twin-turbo V6 engine developing 503 bhp. In the pipeline are more affordable diesel and petrol versions, so the SUV sales race has just shifted into a higher gear. The Stelvio sounds like the ideal long term replacement for the club's recently acquired Nissan Terrano Response Vehicle...



Top HQ points-scorer at Manfeild in 2017 and winner of the Wisemens Trophy in Memory of Ash Cairns is Dean Foster, Car 35.

This trophy was originally awarded to the HQ Driver of the Series, but with the passing of Ash Cairns the Committee decided to make the award contestable every time the HQs race at Manfeild.

Ash was a stalwart of the HQ Category right from the start.

Your contributions to Grid Torque can be sent directly to Russell at russellharris@clear.net.nz or to Trevor at littlebarton@actrix.gen.nz

Track & Yack – Tuesday 14th March @ 7pm
Rose & Crown Olde English Pub
Terrace End Carpark
Palmerston North

62nd NEW ZEALAND GRAND PRIX WEEKEND THOUGHTS...

Good looker. Not a person, not a car, but Manfeild itself. The presentation of Circuit Chris Amon was a credit to all those responsible, even the weatherman played his part by producing green grass for the occasion. New signage proclaimed the recent name change. Everywhere you looked there was colour, colour, colour, all helping create an atmosphere that has not been seen for many years. The car parks were bulging. The stands had many more people. What a difference a year makes, it showed that Manfeild Circuit Chris Amon is back on track...

Top call. The idea of running twilight races on the Saturday of the NZGP meeting was brilliant, of course the weatherman played a major role too by giving Manfeild a day with temperatures in the low twenties. Qualifying in the morning with the afternoon's racing beginning around 2.45 with nine events and the last four being the crowd pleasing NZ Touring Cars, V8 Utes, GT1/GT2 and the perfect finale with the Central Muscle Cars. It was all over by seven o'clock. Now that's what you call getting it right...

Another top call. Sunday not ending with the GP. In past years the crowd has been in the process of departing before and during the trophy presentations, so the change was welcomed by the young international drivers and their teams. That was the good news, not so good was this year's presentations were a little shambolic, by the fifth round you would have expected the usually highly efficient Toyota people to have got it right. On a brighter note the new-look programming meant the meeting finished on the best possible note with the V8 Touring Car, V8 Ute, Central Muscle Car and GT1-GT2 races following the presentations. That ensured the fans left on a high and hopefully will return, maybe with a friend to boost spectator numbers...

Most popular viewing spot. It had to be the mobile bar and events centre sited on the top of the spectator embankment. Based on an 18 wheel Mitsubishi Fuso chassis, the 30 tonne "NATION" transformer truck converts into a wine bar and hospitality facility with seventy seats, both indoor and outdoor. It's a very clever piece of kiwi design and engineering, most of those who visited were not short-term stayers and enjoyed viewing the action from the best seats in the house with many of the weekend's crashes/incidents happening just metres away. The "NATION" took spectating to a new level in more ways than one...

Special guests impressed. Both Jacky Ickx and Allan Moffatt were remarkably approachable and chatty, they signed memorabilia and had dozens of photographs taken. Moffatt was very much the happy wanderer, he visited the Manfeild and Higgins suites and was seen strolling leisurely around the pits with his "minder" close by. Moffatt raced on the Levin track in the early seventies but unfortunately never competed at Manfeild. Having these two mega stars of motor racing at Manfeild for a personal re-union was a masterstroke, remember the pair won the Bathurst Hardie Ferodo 1000 in 1977 in the famous "staged" Ford Falcon 1-2 side-by-side finish, the official winning margin being 1/10th of a second. While chatting Moffatt said it wasn't exactly "staged", the # 2 car caught up because he had no brakes for the final 12 laps!! Proud Manfeild CEO Julie Keane knew what strings to pull, it was a coup of epic proportions...

Top job. Acting as "minder" for Allan Moffatt would be the dream job for most blue oval badge enthusiasts. The Manfeild "minder" was Phil Grant, a prominent member of the Falcon GT Club of Australia. The big happy-go-lucky Ocker is extremely proud of the fact that he owns the first Falcon XR GT that came off the production line in 1967, only 596 examples were built and all but 13 cars were painted "GT Gold". The muscle car era began with the XR GT and it had impressive performance thanks to the 289 cubic inch (4.7 litre) Windsor V8 from the Ford Mustang. The engine produced 150 kW (200 bhp) and was coupled to a 4-speed manual gearbox, top speed was 195 km/h (121 mph) and acceleration from 0 to 100 km/h took 9.7 seconds. The Falcon XR GT wasn't exactly a rocket ship by today's standards, but fifty years ago it was damn quick...

Unveiling Circuit Chris Amon. How good was it to have two cars that figured strongly in Chris's career at the track for the dedication meeting. His early Maserati 250 F was on static display while the magnificent replica of

the 1966 Le Mans winning Ford GT40 was driven on a parade lap immediately prior to the grand prix race by six-time Le Mans winner Jacky Ickx with Tish Amon in the passenger's seat. It was a very special couple of minutes as the black car with the # 2 boldly displayed circulated the track. We need more people like John Bellamore (Southward's Museum), Grant Aitken (Ford GT40) and local man Terry Rush to preserve our proud motorsport heritage...

Flyover. The RNZAF paid their own tribute to the man from Bulls with a 4-ship of their new Beechcraft Texan trainers. A diamond formation flyover was followed by a low level flypast before the aircraft split in a spectacular bomb burst. Thank you to the Ohakea fly boys, you added much to the Manfeild experience...

MCC V-Force did the club proud. The Manawatu Car Club provided the flag marshals and crash/rescue crew for the grand prix meeting and once again they performed to their own self-imposed high level. There were a number of accidents/incidents that were handled with speed, skill and efficiency, and the flaggies matched them in terms of professionalism. A nice touch was the flag waving salute to drivers, it's an appropriate tribute and adds a lot of colour. These V-Forcers and the grid marshals are highly visible, but don't forget that on Level 2 of the main building there were V-F people on the operational side with the Clerk of Course and Assistant Clerks of Course for the non-championship races, together with the heads of the infield departments. All these people are very important elements in the smooth running of events at the circuit...

Pre-race rituals. Every driver has a different approach to a race, some are cool, calm and collected, others right on the nervous edge, and most somewhere in between. At Manfeild we saw something completely different from several of the teenage international pedallers. Part of their warm-up process was a session sparring with a suspended boxing bag, in the words of the great Cassius Clay, they were "walking like a butterfly and stinging like a bee". Was it to sharpen their minds and reflexes, or was it to get a degree of aggression out of their systems?? It was certainly a different approach...

Close finish. Thirty-one points separated the top three drivers when they arrived for the final round at Manfeild of the 2017 Castrol Toyota Racing Series. After the first two races of the weekend they were separated by just 2 points, so the outcome was dependant on the final race, appropriately the NZGP. Table topping Australian Thomas Randle finished third to claim the title and the prestigious Chris Amon Trophy, while Pedro Piquet (Brazil) leap-frogged Richard Verschoor (Netherlands) for the overall runner-up spot. Five meetings, fifteen races, it was a hard fought battle for the coveted number one spot...

Another fast Indian. The name of Jehan Daruvala is the latest to be engraved on the NZGP Trophy. The 18 year old from Mumbai finished runner-up in last year's TRS series behind British driver Lando Norris but dropped to fifth in the standings this year. That disappointment would have been more than compensated for by holding the GP trophy aloft and having his name added to a long list of past winners. Jehan is number 62...

Big futures?? Three teenagers in the 2017 TRS were Academy Drivers linked to Formula One teams. Richard Verschoor (16) is aligned with Red Bull, Jehan Daruvala (18) with Force India while Christchurch's Marcus Armstrong (16) is with Ferrari. Beginning in April, Armstrong will contest both the German and Italian Formula 4 Championship series driving for the Prema Powerteam who have a previous TRS link, 2015 champion and NZGP winner Lance Stroll won the Italian Championship in 2014 for the crack Italian outfit. Armstrong will be in good company, his team mate will be 15 year old Brazilian Enzo Fittipaldi, the grandson of Emerson Fittipaldi, the two-time F1 world champion. Only time will tell if these driver's dreams will be realised, but irrespective of the outcome they're on an amazing journey. As Brendon Hartley has proved, there is life other than F1...

Great support class racing. This was the year that Manfeild got the support classes that would put bums on seats and they delivered the goods. Reid Harker (Toyota 86 Championship), Liam Lawson (Formula 1600 Championship) and Matt Whittaker (Porsche Championship) won all three of their races, Simon Evans (NZ Touring Cars) and Richard Moore (V8 Utes) won two out of three while the crowd pleasing Central Muscle Cars, GT1-GT2 and GT3-GT4 classes produced different winners for each of the nine races with some thrilling racing along the way. The punters definitely got their money's worth...

Around 350 people attended the combined Chris Amon Celebration Dinner and TRS Prizegiving in the big stadium. It was an amazing setting with no less than five very large screens to ensure everyone could see what was happening, and a top quality sound system. The stage was flanked by the two cars that played key roles in Chris's racing career, the Maserati 250 F and Ford GT40. Quality food from Hester Guy with table service provided by senior students from Feilding High School. The venue was outstanding in all respects...

It wasn't all good news. Many people attended the Chris Amon Tribute Dinner to hear special guest Jacky Ickx, one of the true greats of motor racing and Chris' team mate at Ferrari in 1969. Introduced by MC Michael Clark, the very personable Belgian immediately got into his stride and the audience were quickly engrossed in what he was saying before he was interrupted with the words 'a final question', and that answer was interrupted by 'thank you Jacky'. There were a few extra minutes when Allan Moffatt was invited to the stage for a "re-union" with his 1977 Bathurst 1000 winning co-driver. But it was all over far too soon for the man that people had paid good money to hear speak...

Very Toyotarised. Not surprisingly the evening had a very strong Toyota presence and they pulled out all the stops to ensure their message was received, loud and clear. Lots of TRS video clips, ambassador Dave Dobbyn sang (two numbers including opening the night with 'Loyal'), well known and highly respected English motorsport commentator Jonathan Green hosted the TRS awards, Bob McMurray was involved, TRS co-ordinator Barrie Thomlinson spoke, so did Toyota management. It has to be remembered that Toyota New Zealand has a massive input into New Zealand motorsport, their presence and presentation at circuits is so professional that it's simply breath-taking. Credit should be given where it's due, and remember the saying, "Who has the gold, makes the rules"...

Ignored. It was more than a little disappointing to note that during the tributes to Chris there was no mention of his involvement with Manfeild other than testing cars for Toyota!! No mention of the Manawatu Car Club, no mention of his critical input into the circuit's design. That's the real story of the link between Chris Amon and Manfeild, and the reason for the perfectly worded by-line "With us from the beginning, with us always". Pity it wasn't told...

Sold. That word rang out eleven times during the Chris Amon Celebration/Castrol Toyota Racing Series Awards dinner as items were auctioned to raise funds for the Kiwi Driver's Fund of which Chris was Patron. The KDF was established in 2015 with the objective of developing New Zealand's next world champion, it has five independent trustees and gave \$100,000 to assist the three kiwi drivers in this year's TRS Championship. The items that went under the hammer were all donated Top dollar was Lot 5, a Jacky Ickx autographed helmet that fetched \$2,600. A Sail Team Emirates NZ Experience for two people went for \$2,100, also reaching the \$2,000 mark was a signed photograph of Chris Amon in his 1968 Ferrari, the package including a Wairakei Golf Sanctuary Experience for 4 people. Topping \$1,000 were a TRS sign autographed by all 20 drivers, and a 1:18 scale model of Allan Moffatt's legendary Coca Cola Boss Mustang with a signed Allan Moffatt Racing cap. In all, 10 of the 11 lots were sold, realising a total of \$13,150 for the Kiwi Driver Fund that is specifically for TRS competitors. The unsold lot was a 2017 Bahrain Formula One Experience that didn't include air fares, passed in when the bidding stopped at \$900. Well done by the donors and those who opened their wallets...



"SAM SAYS" - MOTORSPORT 101...

Sam says – Is motor racing the new mindfulness?

So, my first race in the RS Cup!

The Manawatu Car Club's RS Cup class is for rookies – those people who have never raced before, or have little experience racing, and who want to take their motorsport beyond single and dual car sprint days. You do need a Motorsport NZ C-Class racing licence to participate. This is not hard to get – all you need to do is a bit of study and take a 45 question quiz to make sure you know the rules of racing so everyone is safe. The test covers flags, start procedures, safe passing and the safety car. I must admit I did feel more confident once I'd learned all the rules.

I knew my car was ready, I'd had some experience on the track at speed and I had my licence however I was feeling a little nervous going out there with other cars for the first time. This wasn't just a track day with a couple of other cars on the track doing their own thing. This was a real race. People were out there to win. People who had far more experience and much faster cars than me.

First up was qualifying, where you have six laps to set a time that determines your place on the grid for the first race of the day. Your fastest lap is the one that is used. You spend the first lap warming up, then it's a flying start across the line where you get faster and faster and faster until the chequered flag falls. It's a great way to get used to going at full race speed with other cars on the track without being in a race situation. People still want to do their best but the pressure of the race is not quite there.

It was no surprise to me that I qualified last. My car was one of the slowest out there but it did have the capability to keep up with the second pack. I knew I wasn't aiming to hustle the front runners. I was happy with hanging back for my first few races. I did not have the experience or confidence to get right up amongst the fastest runners on the track. And that's ok. The whole idea of RS Cup is to gain experience and develop your confidence to the level you are comfortable with. That may mean staying in RS Cup and moving up the order, or joining the SF Cup and competing with the faster cars for placings and prizes.

I must admit I was quite relieved to be starting from the back of the grid. There were some 15 cars in my first race – not a small number – so I felt safer at the back. I was most worried that I'd mess up the start and would either jump it or worse.... stall! That would be mortifying!! At least if I was at the back no one could hit me from behind.

The lights went out and we were off! I dropped the clutch and sped towards Toyota. I held back because it can get a bit messy in there with all those cars vying for the top spot. I just let them do their thing and away we all went. Lap after lap I pushed my little Civic as fast as I could push it, waiting until my tyres were warm and the pack had settled until I really went for it. I was glancing in the mirror at the free space behind me on lap 1, lap 2, lap 3 and lap...4...oh, wait a minute, what's that? That's another car, one of the front runners. Oh no, I'm going to get lapped! I expected to come last, but I didn't expect to get lapped.

I came dead last, which I was ok with, but three cars lapped me. Oh well, at least that gave me a clear goal for the next race. Don't get lapped.

The next race was a full reverse grid. That meant the person who came last was supposed to go first. That was me. I was terrified, so terrified that I asked the grid marshal if I could go last again. He was totally cool with that. So I went last again. And I came last again. But I DID NOT GET LAPPED!!! Woo hoo! Now, there's an improvement right there; a goal set and conquered.

The third race was a handicap race. This means that the slowest cars go first again but with a gap between groups. You may go by yourself, or you may go in a small group with a five second or more delay between

flags. You are told your grid position and your flag drop number before you go out for your warm up lap. This time I had the confidence to be up front because I knew it wouldn't be a mad rush for the first corner and I wouldn't have a pile of cars behind me trying to past me.



Rookie of the year

I was on grid position one on the first flag drop. Three of us took off towards the first corner. I was neck and neck with another car and then sneaky Tammie Boyden whipped up the middle between us! Tammie was first to the corner. I had the line so I went round second and the other car third. I floored it! I pushed that little Civic as fast as she would go and I kept up, at least for a little while. It wasn't long before I was getting passed by a lot of cars. But not all of them. I didn't come last in that race, and I definitely didn't get lapped. I also achieved a personal best lap time. That's what a bit of competition can do for you. I was so proud of myself, not only for improving in each race but for actually giving it a go, believing in myself and getting off my butt to do something a little less ordinary.

And mindfulness? I cannot explain the adrenalin rush you get from racing, even in the slowest car in the slowest class. It's exhilarating! You really know you are alive, you fully focus and you can do nothing but be in the moment. This is, ironically, an activity that achieves mindfulness, society's most fashionable trend right now. It's noisy, it's hot, it's competitive but it is also somewhat spiritual. I can see how people become addicted. The most enjoyable aspect is not the mindfulness or the adrenalin rush, it is believing that you can do something that not a lot of people do, doing it and seeing yourself improve with each lap. You feel the way you take each corner, the entry speed, the exit speed, the lines you take, the way you interact with other cars, how scared and how confident you feel. It really is a great way to find your limits and to push them as far as you dare.



In full flight!

Manawatu's Blue Loos

Gecko

ENVIRONMENTAL 2014 LTD


0800 025 552

Septic Tank Cleaning & Portaloos Hire
loos@geckoenvironmental.co.nz

Suppliers of Port-a-Loos to the Winter Series.

MITRE 10 MEGA




PALMERSTON NORTH



DANNY'S

AUTO SERVICES

FULL MECHANICAL REPAIRS

YOUR NEW LOCAL STOCKIST OF JAMEX RACE PRODUCTS

Seats and harness in stock now. For a super friendly deal talk to Danny NOW

Phone (06) 358 6884 or visit them at 25 David St Palmerston North

CONFESSIONS...



Pukekohe Gold Star Series round, November 1978.

Dave McMillan in the Ralt RT 1 leads Ross Stone in the Cuda. McMillan was highly successful in Pacifics after earlier in his career racing Formula Fords here in NZ and Super Vees in the USA. He won the International Series in 1980 and the NZ Grand Prix in 1981. In addition he was NZ Gold Star champion in 1976/77, 1978/79 and 1979/80 and was inducted into the New Zealand Motorsports Wall of Fame in 2006.

A month earlier the circus was at Manfeild for its round of the series.

No excuses here for another gratuitous paddock shot of my favourite Formula Pacific car. Note the Cuda is in "interim" configuration, with the semi chisel nose, however without the aero sidepods designed by Adrian Reynard. This car now resides in the fabulous Gary Devon collection in rural South Auckland, fortunately back in its original form. Note also the typical Manfeild pit area surface !! obviously the mowing was running behind schedule.



Back to Pukekohe, and Eric Morgan in his freshly painted and liveried Chevron B29 leads Hugh Owens Ralt RT1.

The 1979 NZ International Series run over the summer was won by a rising star Teo Fabi, after strong competition by Larry Perkins, Brett Riley and Dave McMillan. Fabi had won the 1977 European Formula Ford title, and finished 4th in the European F3 series in 1978 before using the series (as so many others did) as a stepping stone to further his career.

McMillan went on to win the North American Formula Atlantic title in 1982, and eventually moved to the USA permanently, where he was involved with both Indy Light and Indy Car teams in a managerial role. For those with any interest in the the racing of the late 70s and early 80s, can I suggest watching the NZ Film Unit TV documentary “The Turn of the Wheel”, which follows the 1979/80 Gold Star series and has some amazing footage including Steve Millens famous Pukekohe crash. It certainly gives an inside view of racing in the period.



Left to right in the photo – #11 Ken Smith in his March 76B; #20 Hugh Owen Ralt RT1; #17 Robbie Francevic Modus and #15 Eric Morgan Chevron B29. Owens car, RT1-73, was brought from the US/Canadian scene where it was raced in 1977 by Craig Hill. Hugh and brother Lloyd raced Formula Fords and Pacifics and later moved to rallying with some success. Note the non sign written nose cone on Ken Smiths car after an altercation earlier in the day (hence his lowly grid position), and the Falcon chasing the field around to the grid.



McMillan postcard from the archives

TW

MANAWATU CAR CLUB 70TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

SATURDAY JUNE 24 2017

**UPDATES ON FACEBOOK
AND THE WEBSITE. KEEP
THIS DATE FREE**



Presenting a compelling argument for maintaining the New Zealand Grand Prix at Manfeild is nothing new for us – there have been several occasions since race rights’ were awarded in 2007 that we have had to state our case.

That process is occurring now. We are pitching a regionally-focussed proposal to maintain host responsibility for the NZGP.

Our proposal initially goes to the series’ promoter, which is also tasked with formulating a championship calendar. Both documents then go to the sport’s governing body, MotorSport New Zealand, which has signalled it will ultimately determine which of the interested circuits will achieve the NZGP. We believe we will know the answer by the end of March.

There are many compelling reasons why a race that has established through a relationship with Toyota Racing Series as a proven springboard for sending our finest drivers talent into international careers, should stay in the Manawatu.

They start, of course, with the firm historic ties to this region. The very first New Zealand Grand Prix was staged at Ohakea air force base, just 18 kilometres from our venue.

We also remind that the late Chris Amon, our world-famous motorsport icon who had such close relationship with Toyota, TRS and – as a two-time winner - with the race proper, was not only born and raised close to Manfeild but also helped design our track. Honouring his memory and that heritage is why, of course, the main track has become Circuit Chris Amon.

Our superb geographical location is also a positive, we feel. Our lower North Island site places us perfectly in the middle of the middle million, - that is, within easy reach of a seven-figure population count from all around this area, but predominantly Wellington.

We argue, too, that Grand Prix weekend delivers a significant financial windfall to the local area, with the recognised potential to pump significant direct spend into the regional economy.

Regardless of how you feel about motor racing, it remains one of this country’s larger sporting events, unique in being a spectacular contest that celebrates our rich motorsport heritage. It attracts overseas’ investment, media exposure and international participation: this year there were 17 visiting drivers, representing 11 countries.

Viewership statistics for the Toyota Racing Series are phenomenal. The domestic market television viewership, estimated at 750,000 views, is significant yet also dwarfed by the overseas’ interest. TRS racing screens in 83 countries and is seen by millions of viewers, on television and online.

The value to our region is also immense. A Business and Economic Research Limited (BERL) report on Manfeild’s impact on the community, released in 2013, provided a resounding reinforcement of the facility’s value to the region. It determined that in 2012 alone, Manfeild generated a regional economic return approaching \$53 million.

Hundreds of motorsport teams staying for up to four nights generates financial benefit from spend on accommodation, restaurants and retail in Palmerston North and Feilding alone. In 2012 visitors from outside the region spent a total of \$29.4 million in the Manawatu region.

With Manfeild proven as a leading contributor of GDP in the region, we say we are worth backing. To reinforce this argument, attendees of this year's race have been encouraged to present feedback through an on-line survey conducted in association with the Central Economic Development Agency (CEDA), as part of their greater research into regional business benefit.

Manfeild has also proven itself as a venue with high quality facilities to match the expectations associated with the race. We also excel at reaching high and thinking beyond usual boundaries to achieve extraordinary results.

This year the Manfeild team tapped into innovation, developed an app for smartphone, mobile and tablet users to download and use at the track. While the app can be used for all events at Manfeild, this was originally designed and built for the circuit and it proved to be a success, with great uptake and usage during the Grand Prix weekend.

Another huge focus is marketing. Our round has long enjoyed greater media exposure than any other TRS event, but in fostering existing and growing new relationships with media and advertisers we further enhanced that status. An intensified and innovative social media push significantly ramped that engagement and created enough awareness that the gate in 2017 almost doubled that of 2016.

We also of course enforce that Manfeild is the home circuit of Toyota New Zealand. We think it is especially important to remember that TRS, as a showcase of national motorsport technology at its best, is supported by one of the world's leading car manufacturers which has its New Zealand base in Palmerston North.

We take delight that the regions Mayors and local Members of Parliament have long committed their support to this race.

Some will wonder if it is time for this race to move on simply because it deserves a change of scene. We can understand this view, however, while sharing the Grand Prix around other venues seemed democratic, it actually flourishes by being in one place.

This point was reinforced by Chris Amon, who always said there was nothing wrong with an event of this kind becoming synonymous with a single location, because that strengthened heritage.

Some of the most popular events in motorsport are those that have been in the same location for a long time, he told us. Monaco, Indianapolis, the Italian Grand Prix at Monza are good examples; the British Grand Prix has come into its own since settling into Silverstone. As Chris said: "It becomes based on tradition."

So, anyway, we're not finished with the NZGP. We want to keep it and we intend to do everything within our power to achieve that. I feel empowered by the positive sentiment received about Manfeild and our efforts since this year's race, including some amazing support from our region's movers and shakers. This event takes a significant amount of coordination and support from many parties and I thank them for their involvement.

Julie Keane
CEO



GR8 RACING...

There are hundreds of thousands motor racing enthusiasts around the world who believe that the only real sound comes from the exhaust of a V-8 engine, and it must be admitted that it's very hard to argue against their case.

Look at photographs taken at Manfeild and other circuits in the mid-seventies and you notice that the spectator embankments and stands were full to overflowing - the star attractions were Formula 5000 single-seaters and the Sports Sedans with powerful, bellowing V-8 engines.



In the 1960's English fans were enjoying watching cars like the Lotus Cortina and Mini Coopers battling for supremacy, then along came the big American Ford Galaxie and Falcons and eventually the best of them all, Gerry Marshall's DTV Vauxhall Firenza. Powered by a 500 horsepower Repco-tuned Holden V8, "Big Bertha" remains one of the most iconic racing cars on the other side of the world. The competition was David versus Goliath stuff and people couldn't get enough of it.

Taking the Virgin Australia Supercar Championship out of the equation, down-under our Trans-Tasman neighbours are showing the way. Sports Sedans have always been strong and they added the Muscle Car Masters series. Both our countries have embraced the return of the classic Formula 5000 racers, now they are developing an evolution of the crowd pleasing category, Formula Thunder 5000.

But the pundits also like their tin-tops. Think back into the late 60's and early 70's when TransAm came south of the equator to Australasia and the Aussies came to New Zealand to take on the kiwis. Ford Mustang v Chev Camaro v Pontiac Firebird, with arguably the most famous car being the Coca Cola backed Mustang driven by Allan Moffatt. Later these big bangers were joined by the likes of the Ford Cologne Capri RS and Porsche 911, they were days that will never be forgotten.

Thankfully a number of these cars still compete in "historic" events, but there's good news for the younger generation who never had the opportunity to race a car from this era with the re-introduction of the TransAm name, albeit in an abbreviated form, TA.



The original TransAm class was created in America, but the concept of this contemporary version originated in 2009 in Sweden where they were known as V8 Thunder Cars. The chassis were designed and built in America by Michigan-based Howe Racing Enterprises and with the success in Scandinavia the category expanded into Canada, Europe and Costa Rica in Central America.



Now the Ockers have added TA2 to their racing inventory, based on the latest generation of American muscle cars with three popular and instantly recognised makes and models - the Ford Mustang, Chev Camaro and Dodge Challenger.

The cars are similar in concept to the FT5000 single-seater with parity and coast control a major focus. Under the body shell with big flared guards they are all the same - there's a space-frame chassis, a 525 horsepower GM Motorsport LS3 engine, a 4-speed G-Force gearbox and a quick-change rear end. The imported built-up cars seem affordable at a quoted \$AU120,000.

With sponsorship from Howe Racing Enterprises, Racetech and Hoosier, the Australian TA2 cars made their first public appearance at the Lakeside Park circuit in Queensland in mid-August, with the right look and right sound the feedback was extremely positive, suggesting the future of the class looks very bright. Only time will tell.

Kiwiland also seems to be heading in the right direction. The Central Muscle Cars have been around for a while now, then at the MG Classic meeting last November there was not one, but two new groups who made their debut appearance at Manfeild - Historic Saloon Cars and Historic Muscle Cars.

The Historic Touring Cars were also on the programme, but they have been raced at Manfeild before in the Feilding Auto Electrical Winter Series. The cars are mainly four cylinder (BMW M3, Ford Sierra Cosworth, Nissan Primera), but it was a very different story in the other two categories. The Historic Muscle Cars drew 26 entries, 16 were V8 powered. The numbers were even more impressive in the Historic Sports Sedans, 27 cars with 21 V8 powered.

So are we getting closer to staging a V8 only race meeting to bring back the sights and sound that spectators crave for??

Naturally, the Formula 5000 cars would have to be involved, then there's the V8 Touring Cars and the V8 Utes. An added bonus could be the GT1/GT2 and GT3/GT4 categories.

The recent New Zealand Grand Prix meeting had a number of these classes and they met the high expectations. Why not go the whole way and make it the ultimate Trans-Tasman Team Challenge across all classes??

We all know that dreams are free, but sometimes they actually do become reality...

RH

WE WANT YOU



TO EXPERIENCE MOTORSPORT FROM THE INSIDE



KAIHINAU ROAD SEALED SPRINT LCC

SUNDAY MARCH 12TH

OTARIA ROAD GRAVEL SPRINT DCC

SATURDAY MARCH 18TH

Entry details on www.manawatucarclub.org.nz or follow us on Facebook



Events Calendar

MARCH 2017

Sunday 12 th	Kaihinau Road Sealed Sprint (Levin Car Club)
Saturday 18 th	Otaria Road Gravel Sprint (Dannevirke Car Club / Engine Room Series)
Sunday 19 th	Alexandra Road Sealed Hillclimb (Wellington Car Club)
Sat/Sun 25/26 th	Tea Creek Day / Night Gravel Sprint (Wairarapa Car Club)

APRIL 2017

Saturday 1 st	Envirowaste Track Day Series Round 1
Sunday 2 nd	MCC Mitre 10 Mega Summer Race Series Round 3 Final
Saturday 8 th	MCC Mitre 10 Mega Summer Race Series Prize Giving Dinner
Saturday 8 th	Fordell Gravel Sprint (Wanganui Car Club / Engine Room Series)
Sunday 23 rd	Envirowaste Back Track Motorkhana and Autocross
Saturday 29 th	Otara Road Hillclimb (Engine Room Series)

MAY 2017

Sunday 14 th	Pukenaia Road Gravel Sprint (Taihape Car Club / Engine Room Series)
Sat/Sun 20 th /21 st	Dual Weekend Sealed Hillclimbs Okoia Hill & Pukerimu Rd (Wanganui Car Club)

JUNE 2017

Saturday 3 rd	Test Day / Drift practice
Sunday 4 th	MCC Winter Race Series Round 1
Saturday 10 th	Tararua Rd Gravel Sprint (Dannevirke Car Club / Engine Room Series)
Sunday 18 th	Envirowaste Manfeild 4.5 km Sealed Autocross
Saturday 24 th	Manawatu Car Club 70 th Anniversary

JULY 2017

Saturday 1 st	Test Day + Drift practice
Sunday 2 nd	MCC Winter Race Series Round 2
Sunday 16 th	Envirowaste Back Track Autocross

AUGUST 2017

Saturday 5 th	Test Day + Drift practice
Sunday 6 th	MCC Winter Race Series Round 3
Sunday 20 th	Envirowaste Back Track Autocross

SEPTEMBER 2017

Saturday 2 nd	Test Day + Drift practice
Sunday 3 rd	MCC Winter Race Series Round 4
Saturday 9 th	Winter Series Prizegiving
Sunday 17 th	Envirowaste Track Day Series Round 2

OCTOBER 2017

Sat/Sun 21st 22nd OctoberFAST

NOVEMBER 2017

Saturday 4 th	Envirowaste Track Day Series Round 3 + Day One Multi Event Weekend
Sunday 5 th	Envirowaste Multi Event Weekend Motorkhana & Autocross

DECEMBER 2017

Sunday 10 th	Envirowaste Track Day Series Round 4 (Final)
-------------------------	--



PARTING SHOT...



"Car 99 to Control". Go ahead car 99. "I am just checking a tipoff of suspicious behaviour at a rural address". Please report your findings car 99. "There is a large gathering of vehicles in a paddock, I will investigate further" Rodger that car 99. "There appears to be sustained loss of traction and a number of extensively modified cars. I am currently assessing the situation for myself".

We have had several club members who were police or traffic officers, including this one (who shall forever remain nameless for obvious reasons) who came to see how a club autocross was going in his standard issue Ministry of Transport Mk4 Cortina 2000. Despite much prompting he wouldn't do a run with lights and siren going!! Paul Webley in his Mazda RX2 in the foreground.

Come Racing With Us