

Manawatu Car Club Inc

MAGAZINE

April 2020



Something for Everyone



I have written and rewritten, and rewritten again, the first paragraph of this editorial as the COVID 19 impact on our sport and lives has changed on an almost daily basis. The 4-week lockdown will at least allow plenty of time for work on the race/rally cars in sheds for those not involved in essential services, you can only think positively. The Club now faces an enforced 2-month break from our core activities, and it's absolutely the correct response from MotorSport NZ, however the implications to the Club will reach far beyond that I'm sure. We are fortunate that thanks to the foresight and commitment of the committee we have enough of a financial buffer (which was destined for future projects – now on hold) that can now be used to tide us over until some sort of normality returns to our lives, others may not be in such a good state. Spare a thought too for Manfeild who have had 2 major events in the Central Districts Fieldays and the Scout Jamboree cancelled and with the lockdown now in place will be unable to operate for quite some time – the impact to all of us will be enormous, however the consequences of not taking action are unthinkable. I guess all we can do as a community of enthusiasts within NZ is to keep in contact with each other, look after those that are less able than ourselves and ride it out.

On a different train of thought, I recently read an interesting statistic in a trade publication which I thought I might share with you this month.

Apparently, the fail rate for WoF's in NZ is 41% on the first inspection, a level reached last year. Interestingly commercial operators, who have a safety rating as a component of their operation, are consistently between 17 and 23%. So, my immediate question to myself was, is this an issue with the testers or are people increasingly using a WoF check as the only mechanical check on their car and totally neglecting routine servicing?? And the answer, surely, has to be a maybe to the former and a definite yes to the latter. Although there is quite some variability between testers, my belief is that in general they are pretty thorough, and the variability comes through differences in interpretation of the VIRM rules. I get to see a fairly good number of cars per month in the course of buying outright and appraising trade ins, and quite frankly the condition of some is appalling. I am aware that some of the fails referred to in the findings will be for lights out, no washer fluid etc which merely reflects people's stupidity and lack of care and attention, but my experience is that there are plenty of relatively new cars with, for example, buggered tyres, that probably just passed the inspection a year ago and have never been attended to. So, you have to ask the obvious question - why??

Well, further reading produced some recent UK research which I found, sadly, quite horrifying. A study of 2000 drivers commissioned by Continental Tyres, revealed that half of the 18-24-year-olds surveyed wouldn't know how to check oil levels or tyre pressures on their car. Similarly, just over half of drivers in this age group would be comfortable topping up their screen wash, and a mere 19 per cent said they would be happy to fit a spare wheel. Those over 55 were overwhelmingly more confident to tackle what I would term routine maintenance items.

Intriguing eh?? I'd love some of our younger members, who I'm sure are confident themselves, to comment on their peer group and either confirm or deny these figures. Perhaps the side question asked which indicated that just 10% of drivers aged 18-24 would feel confident navigating using a paper map, gives a clue??

Interesting fact – the average new car wiring harness is some 20kg. The average 1970 car wiring harness is 5.5kg (and I'll bet my 52-year-old Escort is probably half that). There's lots more gadgets of course and much more scope for the smoke that makes it all work to go missing!!

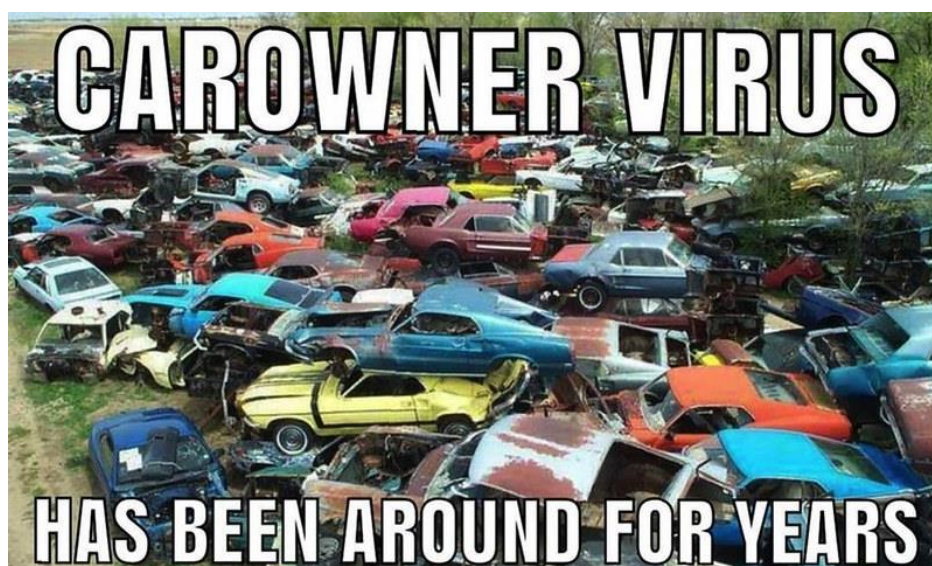
We have a fair variety in the magazine this month which should help with the boredom. I am still searching for people who will send a semi regular report on their motorsport and/or other activities to me, with some 450 members you would think that would be easy, however it always seems to fall back to the usual handful. It was great to get input last month from Jodie, bringing a new perspective from the drift scene. While many purists screw their nose up at drifting, the skill, dedication and commitment of competitors is just the same as any other form of motorsport, and it deserves wider recognition. It's certainly spectacular to watch!!

It's interesting to see so much humour emerging on social media to help relieve the lockdown situation. Long may that continue, even the really tongue in cheek stuff. So, please stay safe everyone, look out for the vulnerable in your community and let's all look forward to some fantastic motorsport in a few of months' time.

That's it from me this month. Keep the rubber side down if you are going out

TW

#throwbackthursday





JUNE

- Saturday 6th MCC Test Day
- Sunday 7th Feilding Auto Electrical Winter Series Round 1
- Sunday 21st Transpec/GT Oils Manfeild 4.5km Bent Sprint
- Saturday 27th Drift Practice Main Track
- Sunday 28th Transpec / GT Oil Manfeild Open Day (rescheduled from the 4th April)



JULY

- Saturday 4th MCC Test Day
- Sunday 5th Feilding Auto Electrical Winter Series Round 2
- Saturday 18th Drift Tutoring Main Track (rescheduled from the 16th May)
- Sunday 19th Transpec / GT Oil Manfeild Open Day



AUGUST

- Saturday 1st MCC Test Day
- Sunday 2nd Feilding Auto Electrical Winter Series Round 3
- Friday 7th North Island Endurance Race Driver Series Practice Day
- Saturday 8th North Island Endurance Race Driver Series Race Day
- Sunday 16th Transpec / GT Oil Back Track Autocross
- Friday 21st 4 & Rotary Jamboree Day 1
- Saturday 22nd 4 & Rotary Jamboree Day 2
- Sunday 23rd 4 & Rotary Jamboree Day 3
- Saturday 29th Drift Tutoring Main Track



SEPTEMBER

- Saturday 12th MCC Test Day
Sunday 13th Feilding Auto electrical Winter Series Round 4
Saturday 19th Feilding Auto Electrical Winter Series Prize Giving
Sunday 20th Transpec / GT Oil Manfeild Open Day

OCTOBER

- Saturday 10th Drift Tutoring Main Track
Friday 16th Manfeild Test Day
Saturday 17th OctoberFAST! Day 1
Sunday 18th OctoberFAST! Day 2

NOVEMBER

- Sunday 8th Transpec / GT Oil Manfeild Open Day
Friday 15th MG Classic Test Day
Saturday 16th MG Classic Meeting Day 1
Sunday 17th MG Classic Meeting Day 2
Saturday 21st ShowVember

DECEMBER

- Friday 4th Manfeild Test Day
Saturday 5th NZ Superkarts Nationals Day 1
Sunday 6th Mitre 10 MEGA Summer Series Round 1 / NZ Superkarts Nationals Day 2



"Track & Yak"

Time: 7pm to 9pm

Date: Tuesday 12th May 2020 (TBC)

Place: Rose and Crown Olde English Pub, Terrace End Carpark, Palmerston North

**Let's hope we can all pop down and have a chat about
what hasn't happened on the track...**



0800 025 552 or 021 509 221

Mark & Rachel O'Connor

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Septic Tank Clearing & Portaloos Hire

Suppliers of Portaloos to the Winter Series.



RACE WITH US!



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Your 2020 Committee:



Jill Hogg



Noel Beale



Jodie Bell



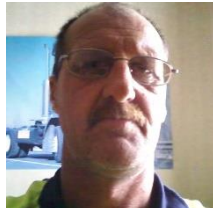
Greg Browne



Gareth Stanley



Aaron Walker



Phillip Keith



Kaye Flannagan



Sean Browne

Club Patrons: Robert Lester, Terry Rush, Russell Harris, Brian Davies

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, Raymond Bennett.

Archivists: Terry Rush, Jill Hogg, Russell Harris

MCC Magazine Editor: Trevor Weir

FROM THE PRESIDENTS PEN



What a rollercoaster of a ride the month of March has been... Early in the month the new MCC Committee got together for the first time since the AGM on the 26th February, and what an awesome meeting it was with lots of discussion and planning done, we all came away from the meeting excited and needless to say we were all looking forward to getting into the year ahead... and then NZ entered an unprecedented time in our history...

Who would have thought, even just on a month ago, that we would be where we are right now! As part of my new job I have spoken to a hell of a lot of businesses, and people, over the past two weeks that had not planned for this type of thing to happen. There have been a lot of hard decisions for some of these businesses and people to make and in some cases it has not been pleasant. Thankfully there are support networks and funds in place to alleviate the impact on these businesses that have had to shut their doors and who's revenue has dropped dramatically, and for those people who have lost their jobs or are on much reduced hours. I applaud the NZ Government for acting in the way that they have and for the speed in which they have done it.

Thankfully the Manawatu Car Club Committee from a few years ago started a strategic plan to protect itself from such events by building up funds to see the club get through the tough times that we are seeing now. We have in the past copped some flak for having money in the bank, but it is times like these that justifies that way of thinking. Some of you might be sitting there thinking, "that's great but what does that mean to me?" Well all I can say to that currently is, watch this space...

The MCC Committee has been extremely busy over the past couple of weeks, we have been reviewing absolutely everything, and we have been working closely with Manfeild and a lot of other organizations / clubs around the country to ensure that we are all ready to go when we come out the other side of this current situation. So while we have been in a slight recess, we have certainly not been in hibernation... or should that be isolation???

That current situation has seen the unfortunate cancellation of the last round of the Mitre 10 Mega Summer Race Series, however we have been able to postpone the first round of the GT Oil / Transpec Manfeild Open Day which was destined to be on the 4th April, and the first Drift Tutoring Session which was destined to be on the 16th May, you will see the rescheduled dates for these two events in the MCC Calendar on a previous page.

With the cancellation of the last round of the Mitre 10 Mega Summer Race Series it means that the winners and place-getters are as of the end of round 3. Prizegiving was destined to take place on the 18th April but we have had to cancel this as well, so we will be presenting the Cups, Trophies and Certificates to those winners and place-getters at a later date which will revolve around when the trophies are produced, as the supplier that we deal with has had to shut down as it was a non-essential service, so please bear with us and we will update you once we know when everything will be ready to go.

So, what else has been happening... Well work has been a little hectic to say the least, I believe our team (five of us) received over 1,000 calls and the same number of emails in the first three days of the lockdown. There were lots of issues and questions that at that time had no firm resolutions / answers... What was the definition of an essential vs a non-essential business? headed the topic board for the first three days in the Transport Industry. Many issues have since raised their heads, from drivers having no public facilities to use right around the country as councils and service stations closed toilets, which is not great for anyone especially our female drivers, to congestion on our countries ports as we scramble to get the approval to move non-essential freight to make way for essential freight. Unfortunately now that there is not a lot of traffic on the road, and more people sitting at home, we are now fielding lots of calls complaining about truck movements... One such call had a person moaning to me about the number of truck movements going past their place to the supermarket down the road... I mean really!!! It would seem the Transport Industry is in the firing line at the best and worst of times and I really feel for everyone that is on the front line for this industry at the moment.

We need you!!! Yip Bubbles even you... We need people to send us some stories so that we can put them in future magazines. Send us whatever you like, your best, funniest, coolest moments in Motorsport, some of the interesting stuff you have been doing while in lockdown, add pictures if you have them. With not a lot happening in the Motorsport world at the moment it would be great to get some stories from the MCC Family to help fill the pages of the May Magazine especially...

If you are stuck for things to watch over the next couple of weeks, I highly recommend all of the documentaries on the 24hrs of Le Mans (there are three of them) on Netflix and the couple of ones on Carroll Shelby. The one thing that stood out for me from watching the one on Carroll Shelby was his direction to load all six Shelby Daytona Coupes on a barge and dump them in the Ocean rather than paying the freight to get them back from Europe to the USA!!! Luckily sense prevailed and they got freighted back on a deck of a ship, as they are now worth well into double digit millions today!

The other series to watch is the documentary – *“Inside Line – A Season with Erebus Motorsport”* which has just started on SKY Sport and is being replayed on Prime I believe. The first episode had me sitting there with my mouth open and a tear in my eye after listening to Betty Klimenko talk about her upbringing... whew... it gave me a whole new appreciation for her and what she has done that’s for sure. That and the awesome culture that exists within that team, it is certainly an eye opener of a documentary and well worth the watch.

Well that’s about it from me, just one thing left and that is that you have heard me talk about depression and suicide before in this magazine (June ’19 if you want to read / re-read it), and in times such as these depression and suicide are on the rise, this is a fact that has come out from the Ministry of Social Development this week. So all I will say is that it takes extreme courage to speak up and say that you aren’t dealing with things at the moment. If you are feeling a little overwhelmed with what is happening at the moment talk to someone, anyone, indeed feel free to call or email me, my number and email address is on the Committee Page.

Please stay safe, stay at home and remember to look after yourself and those that are with you...

Richie

P.S. A huge thank you to all of those people that contributed to the MCC Magazine this month. With everything else going on at the moment it is a huge effort to also take the time to put pen to paper, so I again thank you for helping us retain at least some sort of normality in our lives.



CLUB MEMBER OF THE MONTH

NAME: Jodie Bell

BORN: September '94

OCCUPATION: Franchise Controller – Hino @ Truckstops Ltd.

RACE CAR: RB30DET, Nissan A31 Cefiro

EVERYDAY DRIVE CAR: Toyota Hilux

DREAM CAR:

Bit of a sicko when it comes to Jappas 😊 Would love an old Nissan KPGC10, R32 GTR or a Toyota AE86

YOUR BEST MOMENT IN MOTORSPORT?

Drift Queen 2018 & 2019. Choice Events & Promotions Auto Atsumaru.

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

Truck driver! My dad's been driving trucks my whole life. I spent a lot of time as a kid with him in his sweet T400 Kenworth. This has definitely given me my love for rigs and the career I have in the heavy transport industry.

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

My mum, Keiichi Tsuchiya, Naoki Nakamura. I would probably need to scrub up on my Japanese first!

WHO WOULD YOU PLAY IN A MOVIE?

I live and breathe drifting so probably Takumi Fujiwara from Initial D lol. Who wouldn't want to drift the mountains of Japan in an AE86!

THREE WORDS THAT BEST DESCRIBE YOU...

Yeah the girls!

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

My drift car... Its cost me a lot of blood, sweat and tears not to be!

WHAT IS YOUR SECRET VICE?

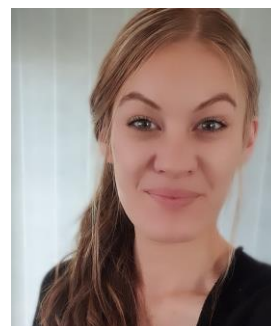
Feilding's Streetwise coffee. Definitely my guilty pleasure.

PEOPLE WOULD BE SURPRISED TO KNOW THAT...

I have a maori name... Te Waihana. Namesake to my great grandmother.

FAVOURITE QUOTE...

"Don't call it a dream, make it a plan."



GRID TORQUE



JAROD CARRUTHERS PHOTOGRAPHY



It all came to nothing. The 2020 Rolex Australian Grand Prix had everything. The opening race of a new Formula 1 season is something of an unknown following the official test sessions, the real indication of form comes in qualifying, who's hot and who's not. This year's support programme was the best ever with the Supercars enjoying full championship status, a round of the TCR Asia-Pacific Cup, the Porsche Carrera Cup and the excitement of the VHT S5000's in their first Gold Star Championship round. Add to that the Speed Comparison Demonstrations, Historic Demonstrations, F1 2-seater Demonstration Laps, a Ferrari Road Car Parade and the pre-GP RAAF FA/18 Super Hornet aerial display and there's a lot to get excited about. On Thursday the fans enjoyed practice and qualifying sessions for the support classes, the F1 cars weren't due out on the circuit until midday Friday. On Friday morning the 950 volunteers were in their positions around the Albert Park circuit, at 10.10am the 2020 AGP meeting was cancelled. COVID-19 threw the world into an unprecedented situation with extraordinary implications. The roller coaster ride has begun...

Kiwis and No 8 wire. The latest example of this country's ingenuity was at RNZAF Base Ohakea last month (Saturday 07) attempting to break the New Zealand Land Speed record. In 1996 Owen Evans set a new mark of 350.543 km/h (216.385 mph) on the now infamous Goudie Road in his Lighting Direct Porsche race car. Eight years ago Eddie Freeman brought his highly modified and specially tuned Lamborghini Gallardo Superleggera to Ohakea and upped the record to 355.485 km/h (219.44 mph). Now the record sits at 363.436 km/h (224.34



mph) set by a car that was 10 years in the making and built from second-hand parts in people's spare time! Sergeant Dean Hart worked with people from RNZAF technical trades who were fellow members of the Whenuapai Motorsports Club, the basis of the car being a 30 year old dragster chassis powered by a surplus 60 year old Rolls-Royce Viper jet engine from a BAC Strikemaster trainer that were withdrawn from service in 1992. The engine produces a modest 2,500 pounds of thrust, but it was enough to propel Dean Hart down the 2,445 metre long runway 09/27 to become this country's fastest man on land and claim the Castrol Trophy. The record is the average speed of two runs in opposite directions set within one hour, the nine metre long JET/D 634 reaching a maximum speed of 458.2 km/h (282.84 mph) on its fastest run. It's a great story for Dean Hart, his team and our country. Gentlemen of the RNZAF, we salute you...

What the hell is going on! One race into the 2020 Virgin Australia Super Championship and Team Sydney's lead driver walks out and takes his sponsor with him. James Courtney and backer Boost Mobile departed with Courtney saying he didn't agree with the team's plans to move forward. Just a few days later it was confirmed that Alex Davison would be Chris Pither's new teammate, taking over the # 19 car with backing from beef jerky brand 'Local Legends'. Anyone for a beef jerky and Coke...

France calling. In June Shane Van Gisbergen is going to play with the big boys in the world's most famous sports car race, the classis Le Mans 24 Hour on the legendary Sarthe circuit. 'The Giz' has signed to drive a Ligier JS11-Gibson in the LMP2 category for Eurasia Motorsport with fellow Kiwi Daniel Gaunt one of his co-drivers, the other is Japanese businessman Nobuya Yamanaka. The car will also race in the WEC 6 Hours of Spa prior to the Le Mans race, but with another NZedder Nick Cassidy in the driver line-up instead of SVG. For the past five years Cassidy has raced with great success in Japan, winning the All-Japan F3, Super Formula and Super GT Championships, prior to heading overseas he had won successive Toyota Racing Series and the NZ Grand Prix in 2012/13/14, obviously that sort of form followed him to the Land of the Rising Sun. That's means Kiwi fans have Brendon Hartley in LMP1, SVG, Cassidy and Gaunt in LMP2 and Earl Bamber in LMGTE Pro to follow in the WEC. Here's hoping that the races go ahead...

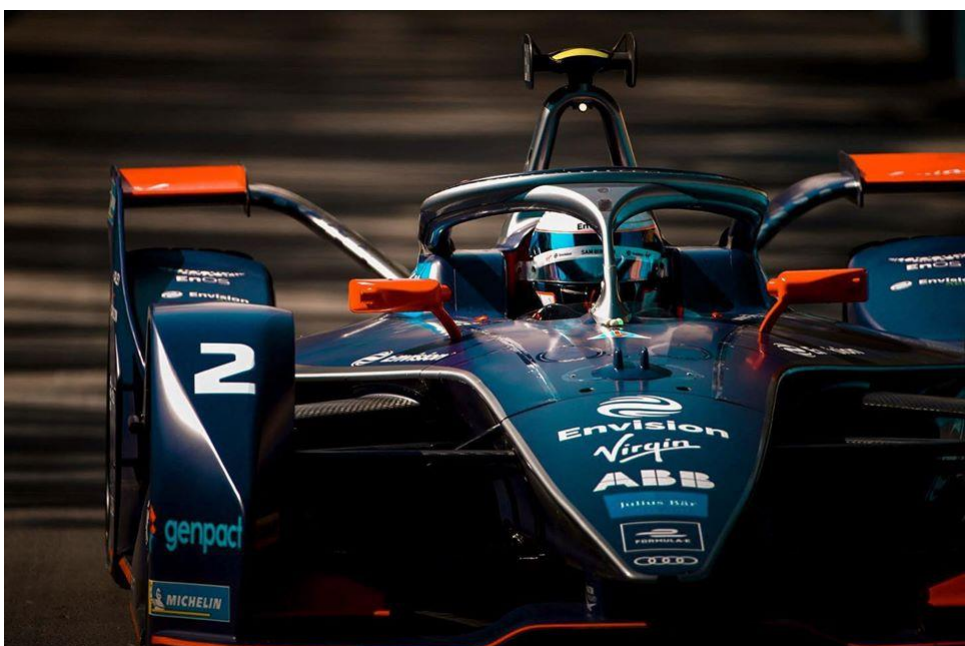


Breaking news... Change of plans? There's the possibility that 'The Giz' will not make his Le Mans debut this year as planned. With the French classic being pushed back to September (?) there could be a clash of dates when the revised 2020 Supercar calendar is published. For SVG the choice is a no brainer...

What/who is Gibson? Based in Derbyshire in England, Gibson Technology is the rebranded 'Zytech Engineering' that was founded by Bill Gibson in 1981. Three years go the company became the supplier of a 600 horsepower

naturally aspirated 4.2 litre V8 engine to the FIA World Endurance Championship, European Le Mans Series and America's WeatherTech SportsCar Championship for the LMP2 category. The following year Gibson produced the 4½ litre version that powers the LMP1 Rebellion R13, the car that's giving the Gazoo Racing Toyota TS050s such a tough time in this year's WEC. Gibson. Winning appears to be the name of their game...

Nick Cassidy switched on. At the Marrakesh E-Prix weekend there was a 'rookie' test in which 24 drivers participated. Driving for Envision Virgin Racing the Kiwi flyer topped the time sheets with a lap that was almost 7/10ths quicker than pole-sitter Antonio Felix da Costa's best in the race qualifying session! Cassidy's lap was nearly 4/10ths faster than Sergio Sette Camara who was second of the time sheet at the wheel of a GEOX Dragon team car. There were two female drivers included in the test sessions with Sacha Fenestraz posting the 10th quickest time, 1.023 behind Cassidy, all 24 drivers being covered by less than 3 seconds after collectively covering 1,965 laps.



Cassidy was enthusiastic - 'It's been great to finally step in the car and I've learned a huge amount from the test. It's a lot different to my previous experience but I felt we had a great test programme and I hope that I've managed to help the team with what they were wanting to achieve. The car had great pace and to come away with the fastest time ever at Marrakesh is an awesome feeling too'. The tests certainly posed an interesting question - Why were these rookies posting quicker lap times than the team's regular drivers?' There are probably a number of possibilities...

When you're hot you're hot. Following initial outings at Sandown Park and 'The Bend' last year, the jigsaw came together remarkably quickly for the new Aussie S5000 open wheel category that was to begin its first full season on the undercard of the cancelled 2020 Rolex Australian Grand Prix. Less than two weeks before the scheduled meeting S5000 secured a naming rights sponsor and the inaugural series became officially known as the VHT Australian S5000 Championship, coming fifty years after the famous brand was launched in Australia. In 1970 Brian Sampson acquired the Australian distribution rights to the VHT brand and Melbourne based Speco Thomas still remains its sole distributor. At the time Sampson was one of the country's leading racing drivers and won the 1975 Hardie-Ferodo 1000 at Bathurst, co-driving a Holden Torana L34 with Peter Brock. But what is VHT? The letters stand for 'Very High Temperature' and the American company based in Cleveland produces coatings for automotive hardware and household applications capable of withstanding temperatures exceeding 1,000 degrees. VHT and S5000 are a natural match...

A new beauty is born. Richard Bosselman is a friendly fellow who really enjoys his motor racing. He made his Mazda MX5 debut in the 2018 FAE Winter Series and over time



has become more and more competitive, enjoyment levels increased at the same time. But last year his car ended up scrap following a multi-car incident on the entry to Turn 1 with Richard being the innocent victim! In line with the Boy Scout motto 'Be Prepared', all was not lost as Mr B had a 'spare' MX5 bodyshell in his shed and the decision was made to build a better and faster MX5, with help from Jeremy Hoskins and Scott Wild at Tremaine Energy Centre, the 'new' car making its debut at Round 3 of the Mitre 10 Mega Summer Series. Boy, did it look good in its bright red paint expertly applied by Eddie Arnold, shiny new wheels with new Hankook tyres and race numbers like no other - the font used is very similar to that used by American Gridiron teams. Karl Mollett at Signfusion was responsible for the bright yellow '89' numbers that are the full height of the doors and look sensational, so easy to read there's no need to even think about a visit to SpecSavers! The Bossel's racer could possibly pass as a promo vehicle for the San Francisco 49ers, while the driver has already acquired the nickname 'The Quarterback'. Oh yes, there were also new 'Racing Beagle' graphics on the front guards, a tribute to 'team manger' Doug who has a new home in 'Beagle Heaven'. Mr B can't go racing without his beloved beagle...



Hot Morrie. The late Kerry Grant will always be remembered for both his driving and mechanical skills. When he started his apprenticeship at Selwyn Motors and bought his first car the immediate thought was how to make it go faster and handle better. The car was a green Morris 8 Series E of late 1930s early 1940s vintage, a small family saloon with a 918cc side valve motor producing 22 kW (29 bhp), it had a four-speed gearbox and a top speed of around 93 km/h (58 mph), certainly not enough for the young Kerry. With the assistance of older work mates the block was modified with a square file to accept a pair of SU carburettors, a free-flow exhaust was fabricated from bends supplied by a local pipe bending business. To make the steering quicker lock-to-lock one of the engineers cut a section out and re-welded the two pieces, not quite the accepted practice today! The then 16 year old Kerry used the Morrie in gymkhanas and hill climbs, people recall that the car went well and was quick. It was the car that started him on the road to becoming one of this country's greatest racing drivers, and it was probably the world's fastest Series E. Two years later came a 1954 Ford 100E Anglia and the serious racing career of Kerry Grant began at Levin and Ohakea. The rest is history...

Following up on the extraordinary excitement generated by the news that the Super Trucks could be returning to Manfeild asks the question - in what year was truck racing actually introduced to New Zealand? The answer is 1989. Over the years the six ton leviathans have raced at most of our circuits including Manfeild, the early years will never be forgotten with the big fields, the drivers who became household names, the four wheel 'drifts' out of Turn 7 and the incredible clouds of black exhaust smoke when the rigs accelerated away from the rolling start. There were the names of Denny Hulme, Avon Hyde, Inky Tulloch, Possum Bourne, Ron Salter, Robin Porter, Andrew Porter, Malcolm Little, Kayne Scott and the biggest crowd pleaser of them all, Calvin Bonney. There were all makes of trucks too - Scania, Volvo, CAT, International, Mack, Kenworth and the venerable TK Bedford. On occasions the top Australians crossed the Tasman to compete, Steve Zammit twice won our national championship in his Kenworth to have his name engraved on the Mobil Delvac Trophy. Today there are new names, the truck's diesel engines produce ridiculous power, but the spectacle remains the same. If it goes ahead, are you ready...



Great thinking. The hierarchy of VHT Australia S5000 have the ability to think outside of the square, so at each round of the inaugural Championship series the winner will be presented with a trophy named to honour a motor racing legend. Unfortunately, the concept didn't get off the start line when the Australian F1 GP meeting was cancelled and the trophy recognising former F1 world champion Alan Jones was left in its box. Prior to F1 Jones raced in Formula 5000 for Hong Kong businessman Teddy Yip, driving the Theodore Racing Lola T332 in Europe, America and Australia. The trophy idea is clever, very clever...

Back again. The Australian Drivers' Championship has been reinstated by Motorsport Australia after a six year absence with S5000 being granted full championship status. Like New Zealand the Gold Star is the country's most prestigious award, in Oz it was first presented 1957. Of today's four National Championships S5000 is the only open wheel category, the others being the Australian Touring Car Championship (Supercars), Australian GT Championship and Australian Endurance Championship. The move would be widely applauded...



Greater interest is good news. A turnout of nearly 50 people for last month's Annual General Meeting reflects the confidence that members have in the people at the top table running the club. Richie Arber, Jeff Braid and Tim Wilde are extremely capable administrators in their respective roles and have a great commitment to the club. They form a powerful team backed by the elected Committee members and two Patrons who take a very active role in monitoring the club's affairs. That greater interest spilled over to the March Trak & Yak at the Rose & Crown Olde English Pub with twenty-two people attending to share stories over a drink, it's a night that's very important on the Club's social calendar. Unfortunately March might be the last gathering for a while with the current lockdown ...

Time for a break. MCC Secretary Jeff Braid is the busiest man in the club with many responsibilities and his commitment is extraordinary, his knowledge of matters motorsport unrivalled. With the club having such a busy calendar breaks are few and far between, when an opportunity arises you have to seize the moment, and that's exactly what Jeff did last month. His delightful wife Chrissie was working in Nelson and due to return home, so a plan was put in place. 'Forget flying, I'll come and get you'. Bluebridge to Picton, along SH6 through the Rai Valley and over the winding Whangamoa Hill to Nelson on a highway designed with MX5s in mind for the first stopover. With top down the Braids were off across the top o' the south to enjoy the sheer beauty of the Tasman region - Kaiteriteri Beach with its turquoise water and golden sand, discovering the amazing Mussel Inn Bush Café miles from anywhere where they brew their own organic beer to compliment a thick mussel chowder. It's the place that offers a bounty on possum tails, each tail is worth a pint on the house, a rat's tail a chocolate fish! Continue on over the famous Takaka Hill where a

wise man once said when you drive over the Takaka Hill you leave all your troubles behind. It's the Gateway to magnificence of Golden Bay that ends with Farewell Spit, the world's longest spit of sand. Time out at Wharariki Beach before the MX5 reversed direction to head back home with a rough crossing of Cook Strait. A deserved and much needed break for both Jeff and Chrissie, just enjoying enjoying...

E-Powering. A motoring journalist needs vehicles to drive and our man Richard Bosselman never seems to be short of a new set of wheels to evaluate for the benefit of our motoring minded public. Last month Mr B was seen, but not heard. The reason, he was enjoying the world of no engine noise and smooth acceleration behind the wheel of the new all electric Mercedes-Benz EQC medium SUV. The EQC's two electric motors (one front/one rear) produce a combined 300 kW (408 bhp), 0-100 km/h takes 5.1 seconds with the maximum speed regulated to 180 km/h. The quoted range is 434 kilometres with a 40 minute charging time at a rapid charging station - that allows enough time for a latte and read of the morning paper at a local café. Can you feel a little envy coming on...?



Supercars back to Puke? The Hampton Downs management would not have been happy with the news that the NZ Virgin Australia Supercar round has been postponed. Rescheduling the Auckland ITM 400 to later in the year means that Pukekohe can stage the race, so will it be handbags at 20 paces with the winner hosting the event? Puke 'lost' the round because of the date clash with Anzac Day which didn't allow them to race, ironically all Anzac Day parades and activities have been cancelled because of the COVID-19 situation. Both circuits have good cases to present to the Supercar bosses. A coin toss perhaps...



The name is Roush. How can you make a Ford Mustang or F-100 pick-up truck better? If you live in the Land of Oz take your vehicle to a Tickford Enhancement Centre and ask about a Roush upgrade. Tickford has formed a partnership with legendary American Ford tuning house Roush Performance in a deal that will see a number of options being made available to owners of the two models. The Melbourne-based outfit has fitted more than 100 Roush Performance superchargers in Mustangs over the past four years and the two companies are now committed to working together on new parts and performance upgrades. So how much better do you want your Mustang or F-100 to be? How big is your wallet...?

The lifesaver? With no 'live' motorsport to watch it appears that the answer to boredom may have been found, eSports Virtual Racing. Right across the board different groups of people, including drivers, have been firming up details for their own respective eSport-series, including Supercars and Formula 1. Certainly,

some are keener than others on the idea, but if you want to go racing what options are there. You may recall that young Brazilian Igo Fraga who won the recent NZGP and TRS is also one of the world's top e-Sports racers with his name engraved on two FIA World Championship trophies. Sure it's not the real deal, but...

OMG. It had to happen, a rotary engine Ferrari and it's in New Zealand. A young Wellington engineer located a near 30 year old Ferrari 456GT that had been abandoned after suffering heavy frontal damage. Restoration was out of the question because of the costs involved, so it became a drift car project. Out with the 442 horsepower 5.4 litre Ferrari V12, fabricate a new tubular front end and install a Mazda 13B rotary, the installation is impressive, winning the 'Best Engine Conversion' at the Rotary REunion event. Not so impressed were Ferrari officials which led to communication between the two parties, the famous Italian car maker is very protective of its image, so will the iconic Prancing Horse badges remain. In the meantime the 'Mazdararri' continues to turn heads, both visually and with the unexpected exhaust noise. Another creative and clever kiwi...



It's not a good time for 'couch potatoes'. With sport postponed or cancelled globally, life has become extremely difficult for lounge spectators with channels screening repeats or repeats of repeats. For those needing a break there's always Emmerdale in the middle of the day or the choice of Streets, Coronation or Shortland. Things will improve, be patient...

Where will it all end? The need for speed and more speed continues with Aston Martin beginning road testing



its hypercar that they say will be the world's fastest street legal automobile when production begins in the second half of this year. Red Bull Racing's technical guru Adrian Newey led the design team who placed a big emphasis on aerodynamics and tight packaging together with a number of F1 technical features. Code named AM-RB 001, the car is powered by a 6½ litre Cosworth developed V12 engine than spins to 11,000 rpm supported by an electric motor, the combined power output being 865kW or 1,160 horsepower in the old language. With aero playing a major role the car's bodywork could be described as functional, it's certainly striking. All 150 build slots have buyers despite the NZ\$5 million price tag and there are stories suggesting one is destined for our shores. Red Bull F1 pedaller Max Verstappen drove the car at the Silverstone Circuit and made the comment - 'To have this on the road is going to be insane'. The hyper Aston Martin is badged 'Valkyrie', the name possibly inspired by one of the most powerful pieces of music of all time that was composed by German Richard Wagner in the 1850s. Listening to 'Ride of the Valkyries' makes the hair on the back of your neck stand-up. The car could do the same...

Did any one else think the profile and styling cues of the initial photos of the AM looked vaguely familiar ?? Those with long memories might recall the Ferrari Modulo shown at Geneva in 1970. Designed by Paulo Martini, whose work includes the Triumph Spitfire, Peugeot 104, Fiat 130 and Lancia Beta Monte Carlo, and based on a 512S chassis, the Modulo is currently owned by an American enthusiast who is recommissioning it for the road. If memory serves me correctly the Modulo even made a visit to NZ, being the star car of the yearly motor show hosted in Wellington during the 1970's. 50 years apart in execution but startlingly similar in concept



Seven UK-based Formula One teams – Red Bull, Racing Point, Haas, McLaren, Mercedes-AMG, Renault and Williams – have put their rivalry on hold to form the Project Pitlane initiative, responding to the UK government's call for help producing medical equipment. The teams claim to have made "significant progress" in three areas: reverse engineering existing medical devices so they can be used to treat COVID-19 patients; support in scaling production of existing ventilator designs; and the rapid design and

prototyping of a new ventilator design. In a statement, the teams said they would "pool the resources and capabilities of its member teams to greatest effect, focusing on the core skills of the F1 industry: rapid design, prototype manufacture, test and skilled assembly." They added that they "remain ready to support in other areas requiring rapid, innovative technology responses to the unique challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic."

Lost for something to do during the lockdown?? Maybe raid the kids toybox and take the lead from the Danish interlocking block crew. Latest release in the Lego Expert series of cars is the iconic Fiat 500 Bambina, a 960-piece kit that makes up to a 24 cm long car with a full interior, working sunroof, spare tyre, luggage for the luggage rack and an opening bonnet. Also Included is a folding easel with an artist's palette and picture of the car outside the Colosseum. But wait, there's more. To celebrate, the Lego team also decided to create an amazing life-sized model, the same classic Fiat 500 almost entirely from Lego bricks. As you can imagine, that 1:1 build was no small undertaking, taking 830-man hours and using 189,032 bricks plus an original Fiat 500 steering wheel. Its weight? 400kg. Is there nothing these Lego Masters can't do??



What's on? Virtually every global motorsport code has been hard hit by the Coronavirus pandemic, from local club events to world championships and everything in-between. It's an unimaginable scenario with unimaginable costs...





FROM THE DENTIST'S CHAIR... WELL... THE SCRUTINEERING SHED... SAME, SAME...

Today's Topic... Race Harness Mounting ---- the new ruling change from "Schedule A".

Anchorages: The series production (existing) anchorage points may be used or new anchorage points created as follows. Straps shall not anchor directly to the seat, its frame / runners, or share fasteners with any other components:

- (a) Eyebolt (7/16"-20 UNF) fasteners shall be used for all vehicle types except for Single Seater vehicles where ISO 8.8 M8 fasteners are authorised, and
- (b) Each lap and shoulder strap must have individual anchorage points, and
- (c) For each new anchorage point created on the bodyshell, a steel reinforcement plate three(3)mm thick and with an area of at least 40cm²(64mm X 64mm) with radiused corners, chamfered edges, and centrally located attachment hole that follows the panel surface shall be used. **If the reinforcement plate is not welded to the bodyshell a counter-plate shall also be used.**

Note: *It is recommended that where counter plates are used in combination with a reinforcement plate that the two pieces are also riveted together.*

So, in particular we have noted many Crotch belts are installed with the eyebolt thru the floor panel, thru a large washer and then the nut... This is not acceptable. You need to re-engineer your mounting point to comply with the highlighted ruling... either weld in a plate for the eyebolt to pass thru, or use the bolt thru method thru 2 matching plates top and bottom...

ALSO OF LATE... *at our last scrutineer training we were advised to make sure the latest FIA harnesses were to be mounted as per their 6 strap, therefore 6 point mounting.*

However, I have recently had further clarification from Terry Carkeek (Motorsport NZ Technical Dept) that the 2 crotch belts can still share the same mounting point under the seat as per a FIA mandate. The loading on the crotch belts is half that of the lap and shoulder belt... and recognize that the lap strap is designed to hold the occupant down. The crotch strap is only an anti-submarine strap to stop the occupant from sliding forward. So that's great news for many!!!

Hopefully that's all clear as mud, and today's visit to the dentist's chair wasn't too painful. Stay rubber side down, and remember tarmac is only for getting the trailer to the events, Gravel is the race surface of men.

Greg Browne

THE ENGINE ROOM SPRINT SERIES 2020



The Engine Room Sprint Series is back for its fifth year and due to its popularity looks like it's here to stay on the local motorsport calendar. Like previous years, Daniel and I have been modifying the series into a competitive, easy to organise, cost effective and most of all fun series and this year is no different. The competitor side of things is fantastic with some of the best camaraderie I've seen for years.

This year sees a few changes as we gradually perfect the series template so we can increase entry numbers towards the maximum capacity per event. Changes include a common template for event organisation which all clubs use. This makes it easier to run and doesn't require as much manpower, which is one of the hardest things to find these days. Utilising remote scrutineering and keeping to the same event timeline (or close to) are a few of the key changes that will help make the events run smoother and quicker. For the competitors, consistency in knowing when and where to be will help with travel planning whilst utilising the same starting lights and control signage will help drivers and navigators on the stage.

As for Series organising, we're aiming for more publicity around our competitors, car clubs and sponsors. In the lead up to the first round there were about 30 registered competitors ranging from back to back champion Daniel Feck in his FTO, to a few new competitors and a handful of old faces who haven't been out for a long time. For example, regular Central Region Rally Series competitor Rob Piper in his AE86 Corolla and ex NZRC multiple champions Richard and Sara Mason in their older Subaru Impreza. A mixed field makes for a very interesting day which is great to watch.



There are some new roads in our series this year like the Mangahao Dams road which has been regularly run by Levin Car Club, and the longest road in our series run by Wanganui Car Club, Tokomaru East Road coming in at the maximum distance permitted for a ralliesprint just under 10km.

Peter Weir

ROUND 1 REVIEW

The 2020 Engine Room Sprint Series kicked off with a return to the fast but technical Pahaheke Road which is located in the Tararua district not far from the famous Tui brewery. Dannevirke Car Club hosted this round with organiser Andrew Brooks putting a lot of effort in getting sponsors on board with plenty of prizes. Run in the same format as last year, the 5.5kms of old county roads starts off very fast with a couple of big flat out straights where the top cars reach almost 200kph. This is followed by a fast, flowing section before changing into a narrow and fast but technical section which is very rewarding with commitment or good notes.

A field of 31 competitors travelled from all over to the Pahaheke pit paddock where the coffee cart and Ruahine School had breakfast ready to go. Documentation in the woolshed, a check of the cars and a briefing had everyone ready. A tiki tour gave everyone a chance to write or check their notes then the field was split into 2 groups. First official run saw former NZRC champion Richard Mason in his older Subaru WRX setting a target time of 3.48 minutes and 4 x series champion Daniel Feck in the Mitsubishi FTO close behind with a time of 3.53 minutes. A little further back the Subaru Legacy of Rex Vizable ran the same time as Robin Feck in his two wheel drive V6 twin turbo MR2, while a new car and new driving style had Grant McGregor coming to grips with his Suzuki Swift after driving his mighty Mk1 Escort for the last 4 years in the series. He had Scott Harland in the little Mini keeping him honest.



A couple of early casualties in the first run saw an engine failure in the FXGT Corolla of Cam Mclean and Peter Langdon in his rapid V8 powered DX Corolla destroying 3rd gear.

The second run saw more action with another former NZRC champion Geoff Argyle missing his run due to the turbo oil feed coming loose on the Evo 8, but that's nothing compared to Michael McLean's exit from the event bouncing off a bank and rolling to a stop in the fast narrow section in the second half of the road. Both of the crew were OK, but the Subaru not so. Richard continued his fast pace taking another 6 seconds off his previous run, Daniel also taking another 7 seconds of his previous time keeping him in touch of the lead. A hard charging Marty Bertelsen in his 1600 DX Corolla had moved himself into the top 10 while having a great battle with Brian Terry in his mostly carbon fibre MR2 and Bryce Hackett in his Mitsubishi GSR.



The third and final run of the day was where Daniel was going to have to push for the lead but an intercooler hose coming off prevented any chance of matching Richard's time. Surprisingly a similar issue happened to the Subaru of Mason's, leaving the top 2 relying on their run 2 times and hoping this would be enough to hold Geoff Argyle and William Menzies in his Evo 6 off which they managed to do. Robin Feck in the MR2 took top 2WD honours dropping more time in the last run and breaking the 4-minute barrier. Luckily Brian Terry was driving in the first group as the final run for nephew Shaun Terry, who was dual driving the same car in the second group, saw him re-arrange a fence and park in a culvert. Minor damage to the car and again the crew were OK. Greg Brown is his newly acquired Honda Integra with updated "aero package" was having a great day along with Christopher Gracie debuting his newly rebuilt Honda Civic, both making loud Honda unicorn noises all day. A standout drive of the day would have to go to Marty Bertelsen pushing the little Corolla to the limit and bringing it home in 8th overall.

The next round of the 2020 Engine Room Sprint Series takes us to the small area of Fordell, just south of Wanganui. A road used in the series 2 years ago and an ex rally stage from years past, Matarawa Valley road is like a small piece of Finland with high speed 'yumps' and blind corners but with a small amount of tight sections and even some tarmac.

As always, keep up to date via the Engine Room Sprint Series Facebook page or if you would like to receive email updates contact us at ersprintseries@gmail.com



Profile 1

Daniel Feck

Current 4 x Engine Room Sprint Series champion looking to make it 5 this year. He has been competing for many years mostly in front wheel drive cars including the current FTO which was converted to four-wheel drive in 2016. Based in Dannevirke and heavily involved in the Dannevirke Car Club for many years, he is also the other half to the ERSS organising team. His sponsors are (wife) Aimee Feck Physiotherapy, Hewitt Motorcycles, The Engine Room Automotive and Team SpeedFX.



FEBRUARY FLATFOOT / MITRE 10 MEGA SUMMER SERIES ROUND 3



JAROD CARRUTHERS PHOTOGRAPHY

Held on the 29th day of the second month meant that this year's 'February Flatfoot' was a 'Leap Year' event, it was also a day with a wet morning and a dry sunny afternoon with temperatures in the mid-twenties - a bit of everything to challenge the competitors!

The NZ Superkarts returned to Manfeild Circuit Chris Amon for a round of their Drivers National Championship, there were the SS2000 K-Sports Sedans, the NZ Six HQs and Super Mini Challenge / Pre65s, on the following day they had their final races of the weekend to back up the regular Mitre 10 Mega Summer Series programme. No shortage of variety then.

Sunday 01 March was perfect weather wise, a slightly chilly start before the temperature readings continued to rise as the day progressed, reportedly higher than 30 degrees in the pits mid-afternoon.

The overall competitor number for the weekend was an impressive 137, there was some exceptional racing with the handicappers having a very good day at the office on Day 2. With the four additional categories plus the Hi-Q Formula First making up a 24-race programme it meant that the 10 minute Brake/Tyre sessions introduced in Round 2 had to be dropped from the day's schedule, it made perfect sense.

The NZ Superkart Drivers Championship round attracted thirty-five drivers covering five classes, another excellent entry. Andrew Hall was unbeatable in the International class following the decision of Ryan Urban to run in the Rotax DD2 category. Teddy Bassick and Rhys McKay were Hall's opposition but couldn't get closer than 25 seconds to the winner in the 7 lap races. Julian Osborne and Daryl Currie shared the major honours in the KZ2 class, Brendon White had two wins in the Rotax Max Light with Keegan Hickson and



JAROD CARRUTHERS PHOTOGRAPHY

Harry Townsend scoring a win each. Mark Ongley won all four Rotax Max Heavy races, three by margins of 10ths of a second over Troy Langley. For many the greatest interest centred on Urban's appearance in the Rotax DD2 category, but the International class top gun had to play second fiddle to Craig Rowe, Rowe taking the class honours for the weekend with 3 wins to Urbans 1.

Thirteen howling MWN Civil Claudelands Automotive NZ Six/HQs faced the starter with Todd Prujean and Brent Cooper the key players. The pair were P1 and P3 in Qualifying, split by Justin King, before they were involved in two very close finishes. In Race 1 the margin was 1.216 seconds with Dawson Chung beating Matt Henney, King and Sheryl Hanright in the race for third. Race 2 saw the gap down to 0.621 with more than 10 seconds to King in third after fighting off the challenges of Chung and Janine Douglas. Prujean also led the field home in Race 3 but this time Henney was the pursuer, the winning margin 3.17 seconds with Cooper half a second away in third followed by Douglas and King. So, Todd Prujean took maximum points in the IRC NZ6, Justin King topped the IRC NZ6 Trophy class and with a 3/3 scorecard Peter Rine had a perfect weekend in the IRC NZ6 HQ division.



There was a field of eight in the SS2000 / K Sport Sedans where Jeff Sharp starred in his diminutive StarCar. He was quickest in qualifying, heading Brent Thompson by 1.73 seconds with Garry Cammock and Michael Jane sharing the second row of the grid in the first Scratch race that saw Sharp beat Thompson by less than two seconds with Jane claiming third ahead of Cammock. The other two races were Handicaps that produced two different winners. Stephen Hamilton took the honours in Race 2, finishing nearly 12 seconds ahead of Wayne Bryant, next were Thompson and Trent Smith. Though out of contention Cammock and Sharp had a great battle for 7th and 8th places, Cammock finished 40.048 seconds behind the winner, Sharp 40.105. Race 3 was much closer with Smith holding on to beat Cammock by 1.73 seconds with a slightly bigger gap to Bryant, Thompson getting up to 4th and two places ahead of Sharp who couldn't overcome his handicap despite setting a series of fastest laps. The race didn't go well for Jane as he incurred a 10 second penalty for jumping the start.



The Super Mini Challenge / Pre65 drew a field of eleven split 6/5 in favour of the Davids over the Goliaths, that latter having two Ford Mustangs, a Ford Thunderbird, a Chev Bel Air Sport and a MkII Jaguar that flew the Union Jack against the might of the Stars and Stripes.

Stuart Crosby (T/Bird) topped the Qualifying times by a full second over Tony Elmiger (Mustang), there was a 3½ second gap to Wayne Davies (Mustang) with Jack Packer (Jaguar) completing the second row of the grid for the opening Scratch race. Shane Hobman (Chev Bel Air) only completed two laps and failed to post a time. In the Super Mini Challenge category Greg Gordon was the pacesetter nearly six seconds ahead of Evan Thompson with a further 1½ second gap to Ken Rae and 2 more to Colin Middlemiss. Bill Robson and Terry Burgess missed the session.

Saturday morning's race on a damp track was a cracker despite the Shane Hobman's Bel Air being shown the black/orange flag the end of the first lap - 'return to pits to service a mechanical problem'. It was game on for six laps between Tony Elmiger (Mustang) and Stuart Crosby (T/Bird), the two swapping places at every opportunity, they swept out of Turn 7 for the final time side by side with Elmiger winning the drag to the flag by 3/10ths of a second, Jack Packer (Jaguar) was more than half a minute back in third, holding a 15 second advantage over the Mini 7 driven by Greg Gordon with Bill Robson next across the line in his Mini Miglia. Conditions were much better in the afternoon for the Scratch Split Grid and it was the Miglias of Robson and Colin Middlemiss that led the field home, the pair separated by 5.2 seconds with Davies close behind and 10 seconds ahead of Packer with Gordon best of the Minis in fifth place. Messrs Crosby and Elmiger crossed the line more than 40 seconds behind the winner in 8th and 9th places with the T/Bird 1.8 seconds ahead.

Sunday's Handicap Split Grid became a Mini benefit with Evan Thompson and Ken Rae who were the second to be flagged away engaged in a six lap battle royal that ended in favour of Thompson by 8/10ths of a second, the pair being little more than a second ahead of Middlemiss at the checker. Hobman's Chev Bel Air was only 3/10ths back and first Pre-65 home ahead of Davies with Robson completing the top six and followed by first man away Terry Burgess. After starting side by side Crosby got the better of Elmiger by 1½ seconds after another fascinating duel with Packer close behind when the flag fell. Outstanding



handicapping with the field covered by 12 seconds, the first seven finishers by less than 5 seconds!

Initially there were 11 cars contesting the RS Cup, Hamish Clark topped the Qualifying times by 2/10ths over Mark Allen with 8/10ths back to Tony Johnston and more than a second to Darryl Hunter. The number of cars was reduced to 9 when Clark and Allen were transferred to the SF Cup after breaking out of the class time bracket on three of their Q laps!

Hunter crossed the line a full 10 seconds ahead of Johnston in the Scratch race, but breakout penalties of 20 and 10 seconds saw the pair classified 5th and 4th respectively, Johnson being only 1½ seconds behind official winner Ernie Greenwell who edged out Paul Rodgers by 4/10ths after a race long duel with an even smaller gap to Brett Paton in third place. Spencer Morris really had the bit between his teeth in the Reverse Grid to easily take the checker flag before being slapped with 60 seconds for breakouts on four of the six laps! Hunter copped 20 seconds which meant he also dropped positions which made for a very close finish on the result sheet with Paton, Johnston and Greenwell 1-2-3 covered by 2 seconds, followed by Tammie Boyden and Hunter, the five cars spread by 6.7 seconds. Morris was 40 seconds back in sixth.

No lessons were learned because in the Handicap Morris again broke out in four of his laps, the 60 second penalty dropped him to last in the official results, 1.00.132 behind the winner Tammie Boyden. The # 28 BMW crossed the line in 4th place before being elevated to first, two seconds back was Greenwell, 1.3 to Paton and Rodney Penn who got home 3/10ths ahead of Brian Kouvelis. Because of their penalties Johnston (20 secs), Hunter (30 secs) and Morris were 6-7-8, losing more valuable series points.



There was a healthy grid of 19 cars in the SF Cup that saw Stephen Marks quickest qualifier by 2.1 seconds over Russell Chapman, Darren Walker was 7/10ths back and 5/100ths ahead of Gareith Stanley who edged Matt Smith by 2/100ths, Tessa Field was only a 10th behind with the top six covered by 3.2 seconds, the top ten by 3.9 seconds - that suggested the racing could be very close.

The Scratch race had the Safety Car out on Lap 3 following a high impact collision in Turn 6 (Higgins) involving Alistair Chalmers and Cameron Antrobus - Chalmers got out of shape and Antrobus had nowhere to go, both cars suffering extensive damage. The incident took some time to clean-up, the race was declared 'cancelled' and re-run at the end of the morning session. With no penalties the result was as they crossed the line, Walker claiming victory by 3 seconds over Chapman with Richie Arber coming through from P8 on the grid to claim third ahead of Smith and Hailey Sinkinson, the trio covered by half a second, with Jeremy Hoskins another second away and first of the Mazda MX5s, six seconds behind the winner. For Tessa Field the race started dramatically when the hatch lid on her Honda Civic fully opened on the run to Turn 1 and stayed open until she pitted after two laps for it to be firmly closed. That left her in last place, but it had its benefits for the Reverse Grid.

Hilary Ashworth was a DNS for the Reverse Grid after a DNF in Race 1 and this time Breakout penalties played their role in the race's outcome with Walker (60 secs) and Chapman (40 secs) going from first and

second on the track to 16 and 15 on the results sheet after Sinkinson and Kolin Yannakis both retired. Field took maximum points from the race, finishing 3.6 second ahead of Smith with another five to Sean Rowles, who was just 2/10ths in front of Samantha Stanley, the promoted Mark Allen and Arber completing the top six. Hoskins was again the first MX5 home and alongside Arber over the line. Lower down the order there was great racing involving Jack Cleland, Cam James, Chester Rowles, Gareith Stanley, Richard Bosselman and Hamish Clark, the six cars covered by just three seconds after 18 kilometres of racing.

Three drivers picked up penalties in the Handicap with Walker excelling himself with 90 seconds worth for breakouts on five of the six laps! Chapman incurred 30 seconds and Jordyn Wallace 20 seconds. So after taking the checker Walker went from hero to zero and last, 51.6 seconds behind Chapman who became second last after his penalty was imposed. It was Trent Smith who took the final honours by a 1.7 margin over Allen with the MX5's of Cleland and Bosselman split by 3/10ths as they crossed line, the fast finishing Matt Smith was 9/1000ths away in 5th, 8/10ths ahead of Hoskins. Great handicapping with the first ten official finishers covered by 7.8 seconds.



Twelve cars made up the field in the IB Cup, including four in the Taxi Cup category. Qualifying was red flagged halfway through the session when Donald McIntyre stranded himself on the outside of Turn 1. At the end of the 10 minute track period Nick Stewart was at the top of sheet 0.068 ahead of Troy Howard with 9/10ths to Mike Marsh, Kerry Tong was the quickest 'cabbie' 1.9 seconds of the pole time and 2/10ths faster than mate Barry Maunder in a field covered by 8.6 seconds.

Two drivers, Ian Thompson and Mike Marsh received 10 second penalties in the Scratch Race which dropped them from 1-2 to 4-5, gifting the win to Stewart by 9/10ths over Howard with Gerald Watson 7.3 back and just 7/10ths ahead of Thompson. Tong led home Maunder by less than a second to claim the Taxi Cup honours. Stephen Marks missed the first race but made amends by taking out the Reverse Grid in a race without penalties. Stewart took the flag, 0.94 behind in a close finish with Gerald Watson five seconds back in third with gaps of tenths of seconds to Marsh and Howard. Maunder got the better of Tong this time to even the Taxi Cup score with one race to go.

In the Handicap backmarkers Marsh, Thompson, Stewart and Howard gave away 25 seconds to Neil King and the Taxis of Peter Harwood and Grant Anderson and 5 to Marks and Watson. Marks weaved his way through the traffic to finish third, but generally there were few positional changes, though there were five finishing margins that were measured in tenths of a second. King led from flag to flag in his Honda Civic and

beat Harwood home by 7.9 seconds with Marks 0.185 behind in third place. 4/10ths covered the next three - Maunder (+0.994), Anderson (+0.316) and Tong (0.105) as the trio of Taxis crossed the line three wide! And the gaps remained tight as the remainder finished with Watson leading home Marsh, Thompson, Howard and Stewart, take out the gap between 1 and 2 and other 10 runners were covered by a fraction over six seconds. A big tick to the Handicappers. In the Taxi Cup there were three different winners so everything will be on the line in the final round.



The GT Cup / Manfeild Muscle Cars drew 11 starters with five being in the FAE GTB category. Qualifying suggested that there could be a few surprises, Gary McKelvie posted the fastest lap of 1.15.11, Paul Dewar had a best 1.15.689 and David Thomsen (FAE GTB) 1.15.976, Greg Cuttance was next with 1.16.241 and Jamie Potts (FAE GTB) 1.16.558. Veteran Ian Easton was well off the pace, 10th quickest at 1.20.299 on his one timed lap before the #111 Mustang was parked up for the day.

The first surprise came in the Scratch race when Dewar and Cuttance started from pit lane instead of P2 and P4 on the grid, pole-sitter McKelvie won by nearly 3 seconds with the next three places taken by FAE GTB cars headed by Thomsen who was 2.9 second behind the HMC Monaro after the six laps. Potts crossed the line 8/10ths behind Thomsen with five seconds back to Andrew Wasley who held off Dewar by 7/10ths, Ian



Williamson claimed 6th place but was a full 15 seconds behind the winner. That result meant the double space Reverse Grid could be more than a little interesting. Surprise # 2 was that the FAE GTB cars filled positions 1 to 5 led by Thomsen, Sean Webb in his StarCar was 1.9 seconds behind at the flag with a similar margin to Potts, next home were Wasley and Sean Browne with the five GTBs covered by 12 seconds. Dewar set the fastest lap that was quicker than his qualifying time on his way to 6th place, half a minute behind the winner, with 1.1 seconds to McKelvie and Williamson a distant 7th and best of the rest. The Handicap saw McKelvie and Dewar conceding a 45 second start to Sean Browne, 40 to Webb and Wasley and 35 to Thomsen and Potts, it was huge ask and proved to be too big a hurdle. When the race settled down it became a two horse affair, Webb kept snapping at the heels of Thomsen and was only 0.153 behind when the race ended with Potts 6.8 seconds back in third place and 10 ahead of Wasley to complete the FAE GTB domination. Making the most of his five second start Cuttance led home the Manfeild Muscle Car pack by 6½ seconds over Williamson, McKelvie was a length away (+ 0.311) with Dewar's Dodge Challenger chasing the Monaro across the line (+0.390) closely followed by Tom Lancaster (+0.954). It was another result that backed up the impressive qualifying times of the FAE GTB cars, to rub salt into the wound David Thomsen set the categories fastest lap time on the final lap of the final race of the day.

When it comes to close racing nobody does it better than the Hi-Q Components Formula First. The M10MSS included a championship round for the VW open wheelers that drew a field of 14 cars.

Qualifying on the moist track saw the top six cars covered by a much larger than usual 2.7 seconds, much of the reason was the 1.28.049 lap of Chris Symon that was 1.23 seconds quicker than Reece Hendl-Cox with Matthew Higham 6/10ths away, followed by Liam Foster, last year's SpeedSport Scholarship winner Matthew McCutcheon and Asten Addy. Ron Carter and Amy Smith headed the pack.

Saturday's Scratch 8 lapper set the tone for the weekend with 1.683 covering the first six cars across the line, Symon worked his magic to take the checker after starting P5, second in the rush to the line was Hendl-Cox (+0.333) followed by Higham (+0.152), Foster (+0.110), Smith (+0.610) and Addy (+0.478), Leo Scott was best of the rest, finishing six seconds behind Addy with McCutcheon dropping five positions to take the flag in 10th place.



The extraordinary closeness continued on Day 2 with the first four finishers in Race 2 forming a tight group exiting Turn 7 and looking for the best run to the flag. Symon pulled another piece of magic out of his bag

of tricks to make it two from two ahead of Foster (+0.136), Hendl-Cox (+0.110) and Higham (+0.650), Scott was 2½ seconds back heading a group that included Smith, Bree Morris, Ron Carter and Addy, the latter less than 10 seconds behind the winner. Hendl-Cox lost a possible second place when he suffered a gearbox problem 50 metres before the line, Foster swiftly took advantage to snatch second with the current champion holding on for third. Thanks to a typical Formula First team effort the offending gearbox on the #1 car was replaced in time for the final race. Foster and Symon shared the front row for Race 3 that replicated the previous two with another outstanding display of the art of 'drafting'. It led to an ultra-tight formation of six cars fighting to the finish and covered by one second, unbelievable. Remarkably Symon completed his treble, taking the flag 0.222 ahead of Hendl-Cox with a gap of 0.119 to Higham, pole-man Foster crossed the line in 4th place (+0.499) followed by Smith (+0.089) and Addy (0.158), five seconds away Scott again led the main group home ahead of Morris and McCutcheon. Three amazing races in the true tradition of Formula First.

So that was Round 3 of the latest edition of the Mitre 10 Mega Summer Series. Despite the lower competitor numbers the racing generally delivered its promise to another good size crowd. The classes are wide open heading into the final round, the outcomes are unpredictable. Let the excitement continue on 05 April.

Thanks to the COVID-19 pandemic 05 April came and went with no racing, the 2019/20 Mitre 10 Mega Summer Series was over...

RH



RUSSELL'S ROUND 3 NOTES

The individual star of the weekend was Chris Symon. In varying track conditions he dominated the Hi-Q Components Formula First from Qualifying where his fastest lap was more than a second quicker than anyone else through to the end of the final race. He read the races with flawless judgement and the chasing wolf pack didn't get closer than 0.136 at the finish line. It was a master class...

When you watch the Hi-Q Formula First drivers dicing wheel-to-wheel like they do you have to admire the trust they have in each other's ability. When you see a tight group of five or six cars coming out of Manfeild's Turn 7 on the final lap with each driver intent on winning one wrong move could be disastrous. The fact that it's usually like that wherever they race is proof of their skill, both physically and mentally. Forget sheer speed, forget the sound, you have to admire Formula First for consistently producing the closest and most exciting racing...





The new Swedish beauty created for Kolin Yannakis emerged from the Edmond 'skunk works' in time for the meeting, but it was more like a 'test' day with the car on track for the first time. The sleek Volvo C70 was produced between 1996 and 2013 and really is a good looker in terms of styling. Not surprisingly it was a troubled first outing, Kolin missed the Qualifying session and placed 10th in the Scratch SF Cup race, but his day ended after 3 laps in the Reverse Grid. Apparently, a rear wing is under development and no doubt the bugs will be ironed out before Round 4. Word suggests that

the familiar cream Volvo is there as a 'back-up'...

Bob the Builder had been busy since the February meeting with positive signs of activity on the back track close to the large TOYOTA sign. After a very long period of wondering 'when', Colspec Construction has started work on the buildings for the National Driver Training Centre...

Linking in with the building programme getting started there is clever new signage on the outside of Turn 9. 'Manfeild' and 'National Driver Training Centre' feature on alternate panels, it's certainly eye-catching...

The close-knit Formula First community worked together to get defending national champion Recce Hendl-Cox back in the game after his car suffered a transmission failure near the finish line in their penultimate race. It was a case of many hands make light work and he rewarded their efforts by taking a very close second place in the final race...

When the red lights go out in an IB Cup Scratch race the man to watch is Gerald Watson in the bright yellow # 28 Datsun coupe. The demon starter has a great reaction time and from that point it's fast forward towards Turn 1, down on the extreme inside as cars move slightly left to get a wider line into the corner and the gaps magically appear...



Medical problems? At Round 2 Ian Easton's Mustang was sidelined with the Roush V8 suffering some sort of urinary problem and kept leaking. Round 3 and the Roush V8 had no heartbeat. Maybe it's time for Jack Jack to talk to the Massey Equine Centre, they look after all sorts of horses so should know a thing or two about Mustangs...

The name of Rodney Penn hadn't appeared on previous entry lists and he made his debut in the RS Cup driving a Toyota Altezza. Irrespective of whether you're a front runner or at the back of the field motor racing is all about improving personal lap times. In qualifying Rodney had a best 1.47.715, in Race 1 he reduced that to 1.43.304, a gain of more than four seconds. Race 2 produced a best 1.39.387 which was an improvement of nearly four seconds. He rounded off the day with a 1.38.433. That's a stunning overall improvement of 9.282 seconds. Good reason to leave the circuit in a very positive mood with a very big smile...

Tessa Field had one of those embarrassing moments in the Reverse Grid SF Cup race when the hatch lid of her Honda Civic sprang open immediately she dropped the



clutch for the start of the SF Cup Scratch race, and it stayed wide open until she pitted to have it closed. The question remains - Did it improve the Honda's aerodynamics?

The weekend started well enough for 2019 SpeedSport Scholarship winner Matthew McCutcheon when the teenager posted the fifth fastest in the Formula First qualifying session. However his race scorecard didn't reflect that effort with placings of 10th, 11th and 9th, more notable in a category known for its tight finishes were the youngster's margins behind the winner - 13.5, 16.2 and 19.9 seconds. Was it man or machine? No

doubt Scholarship boss Dennis Martin would have had a few words...

Where have all those Holden HQs gone. At this meeting there were only four on the grid for the NZ6/HQ races! In the late 1980's the HQ was introduced in Australia as a cheap and affordable one-make racing category, they were first raced in Tasmania before being adopted by other states on the mainland. The class crossed the Tasman and became incredibly popular, there were separate North and South Island Series. Local drivers Paul Whitcombe, Murray Starnes and the late Ash Cairns were front runners while Chris Pither won back-to-back NZ Holden HQ Championships in 2003 and 2004. Obviously very different times...



Both cars involved in the incident at Higgins in the SF Cup race were badly damaged with the words 'write-off' being used by some. For Cameron Antrobus it was a double disaster as it was his day-to-day drive car, but club racers are a special breed and a group of Ess Effers adopted the motto of the famous Three Musketeers created by French author Alexandre Dumas back in the 19th Century - 'All for one, and one for all', which meant if one of the friends was in trouble they would all fight to help. In this case the swords were replaced by spanners and other assorted tools as they attacked the car to ascertain the full extent of the damage, to see what was salvageable and what was scrap metal. Another wonderful example of the comradeship that exists in MCC club racing...

Hamilton's Rowe family were out in force with three generations racing against each other in the NZ Superkart Drivers Championship. Craig, teenage son Jaxon and grandad Ken contested the Rotax DD2 category that included International class supremo Ryan Urban on this occasion. Craig beat Urban in three of the four races with the closest finish between the pair 4/100ths of a second. For some the name of Ken Rowe will be familiar as he races a Kenworth Super Truck, finishing fifth in the 2006 NZ Championship, and he's very excited about returning to Manfeild Circuit Chris Amon later in the year. But in the big rig this time...

Still showing the way to do it. The MCC V-Forcers just keep on delivering. From the efforts of the Glenn brothers on the bridge to the infielders and everyone in between another meeting was conducted with military-like precision. The Grid Marshals had the first qualifying session out on the track five minutes ahead of schedule, Crash Rescue had a major clean-up following the incident at Higgins in the SF Cup Scratch race that was re-run at the end of the morning programme. Despite all the happenings lunch was taken at 12.35, twenty minutes ahead of schedule which allowed an extended break before racing recommenced at 1.20. Twelve races and 76 laps later the checker fell on the GT Cup/Manfeild Muscle cars at 4.18pm, nearly 40 minutes before the race was due to start! Our V-Force is efficient without being officious. Just the way it should be...

RH



SHE'S A LONG HARD ROAD



Chris Amon is probably most remembered for two things, being the best driver never to win a World Championship F1 race, and for the controversial win at Le Mans in 1966 with Bruce McLaren.

The Kiwis Grand Prix career started in 1963 with the Parnell Lola Mk4A running a Climax V8 engine, but the team was always slightly underfunded and not running the latest spec cars, so his potential didn't have a chance to shine. In 1964 he failed to qualify for the first race of the season, the Monaco GP, but at the following Dutch GP he showed his true ability, as a 21-year-old scoring his first World Championship points. The rest of his season was a series of disappointing DNF's.

However, 1964 saw the versatile youngster start at the Le Mans 24 Hour race for the first time. Ford had entered the first of the 4.2 litre GT40's with a strong driver line-up in the three John Wyer managed works cars. Additionally, Ford were providing support for Carroll Shelby and Briggs Cunningham who were running the latest evolution of the Cobra, the Daytona Cobra Coupe. With the 289 Windsor engine on board these cars were well proven, capable of 180 mph and the Shelby pairing of Dan Gurney and Bob Bondurant was highly fancied in the GT class where the major competition was from the Ferrari 250 GTO. Amon was paired with German driver Jochen Neerspach in the Cunningham entry. Gurney qualified his car ahead of Amon, but both cars were the only GT entries to circulate in under 4 minutes. From the start Amon got the jump on his rivals and he and Neerspach held a comfortable advantage for the first 10 hours. At around the 11 hour mark the car pitted with an alternator problem. Unfortunately, the mechanics jump started the car with a slave battery, this was spotted by the Ferrari mechanics and led to disqualification of the car while lying in 4th overall and 1st in class. The Shelby Cobra entry went on to finish 4th (in a Ferrari sandwich, they

took 1st 2nd, 3rd, 5th and 6th) and win the class a case of if only for the Kiwi kid.

Le Mans 1

Kiwi o



For 1965 Amon was again drafted into the Ford effort, this time in one of the newly revised GT40 Mk II, which had much improved aerodynamic performance over the previous year's cars. The 2 factory cars were sent from Ford Advanced Vehicles in the UK to Kar Kraft in the USA to be fitted with 7 litre 450hp engines, ready for the Phill Hill / Chris Amon and Bruce McLaren / Ken Miles pairings. Two 4.7L engine cars were made available for the Alan Mann Racing and Rob Walker Racing teams. A severe storm with felled trees and flooding disrupted practice, but the rescheduled extra session on Saturday saw Hill well and truly fastest. Stabilising fins were added to both GT40 X cars to help with the aero package. Amon took the start, and he and McLaren set about building a lead on the trailing Ferraris. Sadly Hill, having his stint, pitted the car in the third hour with clutch issues, costing the pairing 40 minutes. Miles was comfortably in the lead until the gearbox broke, which left Amon and Hill trying desperately to make up the 10 laps of lost time. The remaining GT40's had all expired at much the same time as the McLaren / Miles car, and sadly the number 2 car retired after 7 hours too, having the scant compensation of setting a new lap record at 3.37.5.

Le Mans 2

Kiwi 0



After the humiliation of 1965 Ford were determined to win the 1966 race, entering a total of 8 factory supported cars with McLaren and Amon paired in the number 2 car, Miles and Hulme in the number 1 car. As is well documented, the no 2 car led for much of the race with McLaren and Amon in hot pursuit. The Ford engineered dead heat finish didn't go as planned and the young Kiwi duo were declared winners.

Le Mans 2

Kiwi 1



In 1967 the boot was on the other foot with Amon now contracted to Ferrari for F1 and Sports Car driving duties. Ferrari concentrated its efforts at Le Mans on the new 330 P4, arguably one of the most beautiful race cars ever created, and with a re-worked 450 hp engine and improved gearbox the lighter and more agile car was expected to take the game to the Fords. Amon and Bandini had already won Daytona and Monza, despite not having the outright straight-line speed of the GT40's, but with Bandini's death Amon was paired with Nino Vacarelli for Le Mans in the open top spyder. A decent practice saw the car start in the top 5 with Amon holding that position until a puncture some 6 hours in. Unable to change the tyre on the circuit he elected to crawl slowly back to the pits. Unfortunately sparks started a fire which damaged the

car beyond repair, Amon abandoning it out on the circuit. The race itself was a cat fight, with Amon's teammates ending up in the middle of a GT40 MkIV sandwich in 2nd and 3rd places.

Le Mans 3

Kiwi 1



With the withdrawal of both Ford and Ferrari in 1968, it was a welcome return in 1969 with the 312P, running a 430 hp engine based on the then current 3 litre V12 F1 engine. Amon was partnered with Peter Schetty in one of two works entries. A good practice saw them start from 6th place, unable to match the blistering pace of the new Porsche 917. This was the year that Jackie Ickx mounted his protest over the traditional Le Mans start, choosing to walk across the track and firmly buckle himself in before starting the GT40, leaving at the tail end of the field. It was a prescient move however as a major accident saw a privately entered 917 crash on the first lap, killing owner driver John Woolfe. Unfortunately, the Amon Ferrari was involved in the aftermath, reportedly running over the Porsches fuel tank causing a fire (which the on-board extinguisher dealt with) but damaging the car too badly to continue.

Le Mans 4

Kiwi 1



Amon sat out the 1970 race, returning with his new Matra team in 1971 armed with the screaming Matra-Simca 660 3.0 V12 and teamed with F1 teammate Jean-Pierre Beltoise. The Matra held second place behind one of the works Porsches until just after daylight on Sunday morning, when it pitted with a misfiring engine. The plugs and fuel metering unit were changed, and Amon charged out, determined to regain the second place spot they had just lost to another Porsche. Sadly, that charge only lasted until just before 10.00am when the fuel meter packed up for good and ran him out of fuel, leaving him stranded at the end of the Mulsanne straight, about as far away from the pits as possible, a long walk home ...

Le Mans 5

Kiwi 1



In 1972 Ferrari had dominated the season leading up to Le Mans, including the test weekend, but suddenly withdrew just before the race for political reasons (or was it just another Enzo tantrum!!). With no Gulf Mirages and Alfa Romeo signalling their doubts over engine durability, the race was wide open. Matra entered 4 of its new MS670 cars in a bid to win outright honours for the French. Amon was again paired with J-P Beltoise in one of the two long tailed cars, the other being driven by fellow Kiwi Howden Ganley alongside Francois Cevert. With a 1,2,3 in qualifying (Cevert, Pescarolo, Beltoise respectively) things looked promising for the partisan crowd that flocked in to watch the race. Beltoise was nominated to drive the first stint but only lasted until lap 2 when the engine let go on the front straight, Amon never even had the opportunity to drive in the race. French pride was restored 24 hours later with a 1 – 2 finish, the Ganley car in 2nd place 11 laps down on Pescarolo and Graham Hill.

Le Mans 6

Kiwi 1



In 1973 Amon, who was suffering in F1 with the Techno team, drove one of the fabulous works Group 2 ETCC BMW 3.0 CSL coupes, teaming up with Hans Stuck. The car was more powerful than the rival Ford Capris, but the battle thus far had been intense and remarkably evenly matched. Qualifying went well with 30th on the grid of 55, however during the race the car became stuck in 5th gear, which was eventually fixed on lap 160, dulling the challenge. Then in the early morning Stuck hit a Ferrari, damaging the car and putting it off the road and burying it in a sand trap. Of note was the fact that the newly formed BMW Motorsport team was headed by none other than Jochen Neerspach, so 9 years later the wheel had gone full circle. The end result?

Le Mans 7

Kiwi 1

She's a long hard road all right



THE HARTLEY FILES



Following on from the strong second place in the WEC round at the Circuit of the Americas, the eastern side of the Atlantic Ocean wasn't so kind to our man a week later. Qualifying for the Marrakesh E-Prix in Morocco looked very promising, unfortunately it didn't translate into the race itself.

FP1 at the Circuit International Automobile Moulay El Hassan ended with Antonio Felix da Costa topping the time sheet, a 10th quicker than Mitch Evans with Brendon down in P17, 1.23 seconds away from P1 and 0.066 ahead of teammate Nico Muller. Life changes very quickly in E racing, da Costa was only 15th quickest in FP2 and 7/100ths ahead of Brendon who claimed P16 1/100th ahead of Muller. Lucas di Grassi was fastest in this session that saw the entire field covered by 1.7 seconds, so qualifying would be key.

BMW i Andretti driver Maximilian Gunther suddenly looked the man to beat when the first part of qualifying ended, Brendon had a very strong session to be 0.382 away in P12 and just missing the Super Pole shootout, while Muller was 3/10ths and five places further back. Evans missed the session which meant starting the race from the back row of the grid while Da Costa pipped Gunther for pole position in the shootout.

When the lights went out it was manic with da Costa, Gunther and Nyck de Vries vying for the lead, but de Vries dropped to the back of the field following a Drive-Through-Penalty for being overpowered while regenerating energy. Defending champion Jean-Eric Vergne started P11, with twenty minutes remaining he



was up to 3rd place and looking at a podium result. Meanwhile the two New Zealanders were going in different directions, Evans was going forward and Brendon backwards! The final minutes were more manic than the start with close combat up front, Gunther took the lead off da Costa who almost immediately regained it using the ATTACK MODE activation zone that gives an additional 35 kW of power. Da Costa took full advantage of Gunther and Vergne scrapping and after 45 minutes plus one lap of racing crossed the line 11 seconds ahead of Gunther with a 6/10ths gap to Vergne who was running out of power. Evans gained 18 positions as he worked his way through the field to sixth place, 16.3 seconds behind the winner, while Brendon took the flag 49 seconds after da Costa in P19, four seconds and one place ahead of teammate Muller.

The result moved Felix da Costa to the top of the ABB FIA Formula-E Championship standings, 11 points ahead of Evans, Brendon and Muller remain 20th and 21st respectively.

Twitter - *'It's been a bit of a struggle, but we are staying positive. Good step in qualifying and we were not far from making super pole, P12. We got the energy management wrong in the race and went backwards. The competition is incredibly high but everyone in the team is working hard to bridge the gap'.*

The ABB FIA Formula E Championship is so unpredictable as the pendulum continues to swing, teams can go from the front to the midfield or the mid field to the back in a single lap, the reverse happens too, it certainly makes for interesting and incredibly close racing because drivers can't sit back and wait for things to happen, they have to make it happen.

For the GEOX Dragon Penske team the disappointing outcome at Marrakesh was later followed by the news that the global Coronavirus pandemic had resulted in the Formula E Championship being suspended with the next round possibly being the Berlin E-Prix on June 21.

The news got worse when it was announced that Round 6 of the World Endurance Championship, the 1,000 Miles of Sebring, had been cancelled because of imposed travel restrictions into the United States. In last year's race the Gazoo Racing Toyota TS050 Hybrids finished one-two, Brendon was one of the co-drivers in the third placed SMP Racing BR1, partnered by Russians Mikhail Aleshin and Vitaly Petrov.

Then the 6 Hours of Spa at the legendary Belgian circuit scheduled for this month was postponed, while the 2019/20 Championship finale, the blue riband Le Mans 24 Hour, has been put back from June to September.

For Brendon, 2019 was a full-on year with little or no down-time, 2020 could be the complete opposite. So, Brendon and Sarah are back in their homeland.

Facebook 20 March - *'Sarah and I snuck back to NZ last week. Very happy to be home! Although we are fit and well, we are avoiding any risk to pass on anything picked up in our travels and are self-isolating. Riding our bikes, enjoying home cooked meals and doing a puzzle has been our plan each day. Not sure when I'll be racing next, but the world's health is the top priority. Stay healthy people, both mentally and physically'.*

So, life is waiting for the phone call to say racing is resuming. At the moment it's a question of where and when, it could be a long wait...

RH





RACE WITH US



TO EXPERIENCE MOTORSPORT
FROM THE INSIDE



SORRY FOLKS

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PARTING SHOT



The late, great, Robert Holden, was one of Manfeild's favorite sons, this shot showing the aftermath of a spectacular race exit when he went off in the mid 1980's and scored a direct hit on the Holden sign at Dunlop / Turn 7. The bike went through the sign, as did Holden, fortunately without serious damage to either, but he did make it onto the national news on TV!!!

