

# **Manawatu Car Club Inc**

## **Magazine**

### **February 2021**



# **RACE WITH US!**



I really like Greg Murphy's rejoinder to the NZTA regarding their latest response to the 2020 road toll (317 vs 2019's 350, raw figures, Covid not factored in). Their cunning plan? Let's try and force fewer safe cars off the road. Greg again lambasts the current (archaic) licensing system and makes the point that learners need to be trained better, made more aware and better prepared, and have a far more rounded knowledge than many have now. He seems to be the only sane voice lately in the road safety debate and is often marginalised because he doesn't swallow the official NZTA rhetoric. Well, I'm with you mate and have been singing that same song for 30 odd years. Train people PROPERLY rather than to just pass the test, end of. Then there would be no need for the "ambulance at the bottom of the cliff" approach and general dumbing down that is so prevalent at the moment (witness the newish 80 kph speed limits on the Turangi to Taupo road).

I also find it interesting that the NZTA is currently seeking autonomy to make far reaching decisions on the NZ vehicle fleet without requiring regulatory or legislative change. A spokesperson stated they were focused on future changes that would not need to go through Parliament (i.e. public scrutiny). Haven't we had enough loss of consultation with semi-autonomous Council Controlled Organisations (CCO's) who don't appear to have to answer to anyone? Did someone mention Auckland Transport?? The same statement said they wanted to introduce social leasing of cars to low-income families, targeting those who may be at risk of financial stress due to car loans, maintenance costs or high running costs as well as having reduced access to safe and clean vehicles. Sorry. What?? So, you lease a car to a family who still have to deal with the running costs and look after it. Just how does that differ from the current model other than the Government will end up subsidising the leases? Another band aid solution rather than addressing the real issues, but then hugs and kisses will fix anything won't they?

On a more positive note, the second round of the Mitre 10 MEGA summer series went very well, despite the no show of the TCR cars (to quote C of C Malcolm, "because they couldn't get their sh#t together"). A very reasonable competitor turnout given that Taupo was hosting the Historics and Hampton Downs the NZGP on the same weekend saw some great racing on a day that weather wise got better and better. I admit I have thoroughly enjoyed racing in the SF class even if it's frustrating just how much quicker most of the cars are in a straight line compared to my green slug!! I thought I had made the best getaway ever in Race 1, gaining almost 2 rows before the rest got going, but I obviously need to go to Spec Savers because I got pinged for a jumped start. Well if it's going to cost you 5 seconds you might as well make it blatant eh!! A 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> after being caught by faster cars in the dying stages of the later races rounded off a great day





which included taking my 87-year-old stepdad for a first time cruise of the circuit during the lunch break. He was suitably impressed (I think) with what we do and the general atmosphere that surrounds our meetings, very inclusive and friendly. And the day finished early to boot!! Well done yet again to all concerned and roll on the next round.

Colleen and I have been busy unpacking and re-finding long lost treasures that have been in storage for years as we settle into our new home (which coincidentally is only a stones throw from where her maternal grandmother was born and brought up). I still need to get some bookshelves made so that I can create a library space and start unpacking the 40 or so banana boxes of motorsport books that make up my collection. Just as well there is a big rumpus room with plenty of spare space. Any club members want a small joinery job??

On my travels I always keep an eye out for interesting “stuff” (my definition of stuff is very broad and eclectic!!) as it is amazing what is tucked away in the most unlikely places. A couple of recent visits to the property that Colleen has her horse grazing at (until we can get her back down here) unearthed some very interesting “stuff”. I’ve already been doing a bit of low-key scouting for an alternative race vehicle for when either all the petrol has gone or the PC / Climate police deem the internal combustion engine an obscenity and ban it completely, and I may just have stumbled across the answer. Powered by a readily renewable, clean and green, energy source – charcoal - could this be our future? Imagine the potential for tuning, driver and co-driver working together in perfect harmony .....

That’s it for another month. Keep the rubber side down if and stay safe.

TW



PS There were 8 fully working behemoths in the big shed apparently.





## FEBRUARY

- Friday 12<sup>th</sup> SpeedSport NZ Championship meeting test day
- Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> SpeedSport NZ Championship meeting
- Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> SpeedSport NZ Championship meeting
- Friday 19<sup>th</sup> Manfeild Test Day
- Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> Drift Practice Day - Full circuit



## MARCH

- Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> Parororangi Rd Rallysprint CRSS Round 2

## APRIL

- Friday 9<sup>th</sup> Manfeild Test Day
- Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> Transpec / GT Oil Manfeild Open Day
- Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> Mitre 10 MEGA Summer Series Round 3
- Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> Mitre 10 MEGA Summer Series prize giving
- Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> 4 & Rotary Jamboree
- Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> 4 & Rotary Jamboree



## MAY

- Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> Alfa May Madness
- Friday 14<sup>th</sup> Manfeild Test Day
- Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> Otara Road Sealed Sprint / Touge Drift Demo
- Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> Drift Tutoring – Back Track



## **JUNE**

Friday 4 <sup>th</sup>	Manfeild Test Day
Saturday 5 <sup>th</sup>	Feilding Auto Electrical Winter Series Round 1 - Test Day
Sunday 6 <sup>th</sup>	Feilding Auto Electrical Winter Series Round 1 - Race Day
Sunday 20 <sup>th</sup>	Transpec / GT Oil Manfeild Open Day

## **JULY**

Saturday 3 <sup>rd</sup>	Feilding Auto Electrical Winter Series Round 2 - Test Day
Sunday 4 <sup>th</sup>	Feilding Auto Electrical Winter Series Round 2 - Race Day
Saturday 17 <sup>th</sup>	Drift Tutoring / Practice – 3km Circuit
Sunday 18 <sup>th</sup>	Transpec / GT Oil Manfeild Open Day
Saturday 31 <sup>st</sup>	Drift Tutoring – Back Track

## **AUGUST**

Saturday 7 <sup>th</sup>	Feilding Auto Electrical Winter Series Round 3 - Test Day
Sunday 8 <sup>th</sup>	Feilding Auto Electrical Winter Series Round 3 - Race Day
Saturday 14 <sup>th</sup>	Drift Tutoring – Back Track
Sunday 15 <sup>th</sup>	Transpec / GT Oil Back Track Autocross
Friday 27 <sup>th</sup>	Manfeild Test Day

## **SEPTEMBER**

Saturday 4 <sup>th</sup>	Feilding Auto Electrical Winter Series Round 4 - Test Day
Sunday 5 <sup>th</sup>	Feilding Auto Electrical Winter Series Round 4 - Race Day
Saturday 11 <sup>th</sup>	Feilding Auto Electrical Winter Series Prizegiving
Sunday 19 <sup>th</sup>	Transpec / GT Oil Manfeild Open Day
Friday 24 <sup>th</sup>	Manfeild Test Day

## **OCTOBER**

Saturday 9 <sup>th</sup>	Drift Tutoring – Back Track
Friday 22 <sup>nd</sup>	OctoberFAST!! Test Day
Saturday 23 <sup>rd</sup>	OctoberFAST!! Race Day
Sunday 24 <sup>th</sup>	OctoberFAST!! Race Day

## **NOVEMBER**

Friday 5 <sup>th</sup>	Manfeild Test Day
Sunday 7 <sup>th</sup>	Transpec / GT Oil Manfeild Open Day
Friday 12 <sup>th</sup>	MG Classic Test Day
Saturday 13 <sup>th</sup>	MG Classic Race Day 1
Sunday 14 <sup>th</sup>	MG Classic Race Day 2
Saturday 20 <sup>th</sup>	ShowVember

## **DECEMBER**

Friday 3 <sup>rd</sup>	Manfeild Test Day
Saturday 4 <sup>th</sup>	Mitre 10 MEGA Summer Race Series Round 1
Sunday 5 <sup>th</sup>	Mitre 10 MEGA Summer Race Series Round 1
Saturday 11 <sup>th</sup>	MCC Xmas Party

**TRACK ' N ' YACK**  
**7.00PM - 9.00 PM**  
**TUESDAY 9TH FEBRUARY**  
**ROSE & CROWN OLD ENGLISH PUB**  
**TERRACE END, PN**  
**SEE YOU THERE**





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**Your 2020 Committee:**



Jill Hogg



Noel Beale



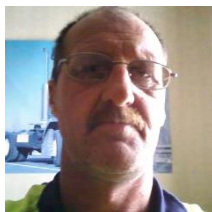
Jodie Bell



Greg Browne



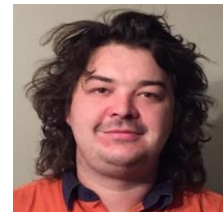
Gareth Stanley



Phillip Keith



Kaye Flannagan



Nick Stewart

**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



Life is funny sometimes, just when you think nothing can change, or needs to change for that matter, along comes something that makes you stop and think... mmmmmmm... I have had a few of those over the past couple of years but this one was a little different as it was outside of the plan for myself and where I was headed.

A chance meeting with a friend one night over a business meeting and I heard all about his business and the work that he had in front of him... he then raised his eyes in a moment of thought and said to me why don't you come and work for me? I replied that I would have to think about it and work through it and he said so what are you doing now, and have you got time to do this now... two hours later we had nussed out the bits and bobs and I said that I would have an answer for him after a small talk with mother bear.

So, I went home and said to Lydia, "soooo I have been offered this job" and before I could tell her what it was she said "take it!". Mmmmm I thought, so a conversation was then had about the speed in which she said that I should take it and it turns out that I have been a grumpy bugger ever since I started this new role, I actually can't print the actual words she used as the kiddies might be reading this, but you get the point. So, I try very hard to not bring work home with me but as the industry is 24/7 it is sometimes the case, but I am better than I was several years ago, however not good enough it would seem. Add to that the time I spend at nights on the MCC and the work / life balance was a little out of balance so it would seem. I have learnt a hell of a lot in this current role dealing with Governments Departments such as NZTA, MBIE, MSD, WorkSafe etc... and with the many Members we have and the Rooding Contractors that we work with, and I have made some really cool friends along the way, but I have been quite frustrated of late (longer if you talk to Lydia). Frustrated with the lack of good old commonsense in some of these departments, such as to how we can fix the road toll, which I have also been preaching to anyone that will listen, and why we need a good rooding infrastructure in place to get freight moved from A to B for the sake of a better economy, after all we are an exporting nation and if you can't get your goods to a port / airport quickly for the world of just in time deliveries, you will be left out in the cold given that we are so far away from the rest of the world. I am still astounded how roads are built in NZ and how the movement of freight is the last thing that seems to be considered, if you want a good laugh and to hear some examples just come and talk with me at one of our next events. It is in fact not really that funny to see and hear of the money that is wasted, but if you don't laugh you would end up crying in a corner somewhere.

So, while I am incredibly sad to leave this role as I was making some good changes and could see others that I could make down the track, you do have to look after Number 1 at the end of the day, and wives only usually give you one chance, so I have to take this one and run with it. The sad part is that there are people like me also leaving those aforementioned government departments and contracting companies in their droves as they too are frustrated at the same things I am, but no one, and trust me there has been many emails sent and phone calls made by us all, is listening!!! So I am going to hate to see what things look like down the track a bit, as I fear things will be a lot worse for the industry that I love so much, but lets hope that someone comes to the fore who has nothing to loose and tells it like it is and actually gets listened too, I however doubt it...



So, the MCC AGM is just around the corner... as always all MCC Members are openly invited to attend the Annual General Meeting of The Manawatu Car Club Inc which will take place on Wednesday 17th February 2021 @ 7.30pm at the MCC Clubrooms situated at 120 Kawakawa Road, Feilding. Doors open 7.00pm.

Voting and nominations for the Committee are restricted to MCC financial members and Life Members only. To renew your subscription please go to <https://manawatucarclub.org.nz/get-involved/membership/> To view or download the Agenda for the night, the Mins from last year's meeting, and the Voting papers for this year, please go to <https://manawatucarclub.org.nz/news.../club-governance/>

Please note that if you are looking to put yourself forward to be on the MCC Committee or stand for the position of Vice President, as per our Constitution section 12.1.2 - "Written nominations for the office of President, Vice President and Committee members shall be received by the Secretary no later than two (2) days prior to the Meeting" - details of how to send the voting form in is shown on the bottom of the voting form.



Annual General Meeting  
Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> February 2021  
MCC Clubrooms  
120 Kawakawa Road, Feilding  
Doors open 7.00pm  
AGM start 7.30pm  
Finger food and drinks will be served at the conclusion of the meeting.

**RACE WITH US!**

I am yet to write my Presidents Report for the 2020 year, which is the latest I have started that since I became President, I did joke to a couple of people about just writing "2020 was a strange old year, and one best left forgotten" but the truth is that it was one of the best years the club has had and that story needs to be told, so I am only late in writing it as I want to do it the justice it deserves and that takes a little bit of thought and time. So, if you feel that the paper that my report is written on is hot on the night of the AGM, it will be that it has just been finished and printed only a matter of mins before the meeting starts, and that there has been a little bit of thought put into it, as there always is, but this one is a little different...

I must say that I am looking forward to this weekends racing at Manfeild: Circuit Chris Amon. Geoff Short from Speed Works Events has promised me that there are some good-sized fields this round and there will be some great action on the track, so if you are not doing anything over the weekend why not pop down and see the action... You can get \$15 off of the entry price of a ticket, simply click on the link below - and when you buy enter the promo code FEILDING500 - and remember the spelling! READ MORE <http://bit.ly/39gSFHd>

See you there...

Richie



**NAME:** Paul Dewar

**BORN:** In Kawerau quite a long time ago

**OCCUPATION:** Hydraulic Engineer

**RACE CAR:** Chev Impala SS Nascar

**EVERYDAY DRIVE CAR:** Work Ute or Holden HSV GTS

**DREAM CAR:** Holden V8 Supercar



**YOUR BEST MOMENT IN MOTORSPORT?**

Speedway, Winning the NZ Modified Champs then seeing my son win the NZ Mini Sprint Champs last year.

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

Don't think I really knew, anything to do with cars probably. Started working in a wrecking yard so I could get cheap car parts before getting into engineering.

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

Bruce McLaren, Rodger Penske, Billy Connolly

**WHO WOULD YOU PLAY IN A MOVIE?** Clint Eastwood

**THREE WORDS THAT BEST DESCRIBE YOU...** Active, reliable, determined.

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

Aston Martin DB 7 Looks good and performs well even if it's a bit old.

**WHAT IS YOUR SECRET VICE?** Have a few but none that I can say on here!

**PEOPLE WOULD BE SURPRISED TO KNOW THAT...** I do a lot of fly-fishing.

**FAVOURITE QUOTE...** "If everything seems under control, you're just not going fast enough!"







# GRID TORQUE

JAROD CARRUTHERS PHOTOGRAPHY

Making something out of nothing. You have to admire the entrepreneurial Tony Quinn, every Kiwi motor racing enthusiast wondered what the canny Scot would come up with when his Hampton Downs circuit was granted the 2021 New Zealand Grand Prix. No overseas drivers as in previous years thanks to COVID-19, there were questions if the Toyota Racing Series would be run at all before three rounds were confirmed, two at Hampton Downs with the final at Manfeild Circuit Chris Amon. In words from the 1968 Manfred Mann hit 'Come all without, come all within, you'll not see nothing like the Mighty Quinn'. Some innovative thinking get out the cheque book and find a suitable title for a race that was run for the 66th time. Sign up Kenny Smith, Daniel Gaunt and Greg Murphy who had collectively won six NZGPs, add wildcard Bathurst 1000 winner Shane Van Gisbergen into the mix, call it the 'Race of Champions' and the mighty Quinn had something to sell to the punters. Who else would have thought of it, who else could have done it..

Couldn't believe it. After everything that Tony Quinn put into staging the 2021 New Zealand Grand Prix and making something out of nothing, he deserved a lot better than being on the wrong side of the Tasman that weekend and unable to watch 'his' race live at 'his' circuit. "There's been no hiding the fact that it has been one of the objectives that I have wanted to do since getting involved with New Zealand". The 63-year-old Scot got caught out by the COVID-19 travel restrictions so had to remain in Oz, the country where he made his millions. Maybe he should change his travel agent who should have been aware of the 14-day isolation, if he booked on-line himself, he should also have known. Not quite the mighty Quinn on this one...

Upped the average age. The 66th NZGP was so different to what we'd seen in the past with a grid of youngsters and an older gentleman. In the 2021 race the average age was raised



significantly with only six teenage drivers in the field, another five were in their twenties, three were 30 + (Daniel Gaunt, Chris van der Drift, Shane Van Gisbergen), Greg Murphy is 48 with Kenny Smith nudging becoming an octogenarian at 79. Leaving out months the total years is 468, divide that by the number of drivers (16) and the average age is 29.25 years. It's a very long time since it's been that high...

The first round of the 2021 Best Bars Toyota 86 Championship was on the NZGP support programme with fifteen cars taking to the track. Justin Allen was really competitive in the Feilding Auto Electrical NAPA backed car and ended Qualifying with the 5th fastest time and one grid position ahead of V8 Touring Car star Simon Evans. Ronan Murphy was an impressive 3rd quickest but was relegated to the back of the grid for Race 1 because of being marginally underweight. Race 1 was won by Ryan Wood from Evans and Rowan Shepherd, Justin crossed the line in 5th place ahead of Murphy who had gained nine places in an eventful race that included a coming together with his Dayle ITM team mate Christina Orr-West. Race 2 saw Allen get caught out with a shower hitting the circuit on lap 6, he lost both time and places but recovered to cross the line in 11th



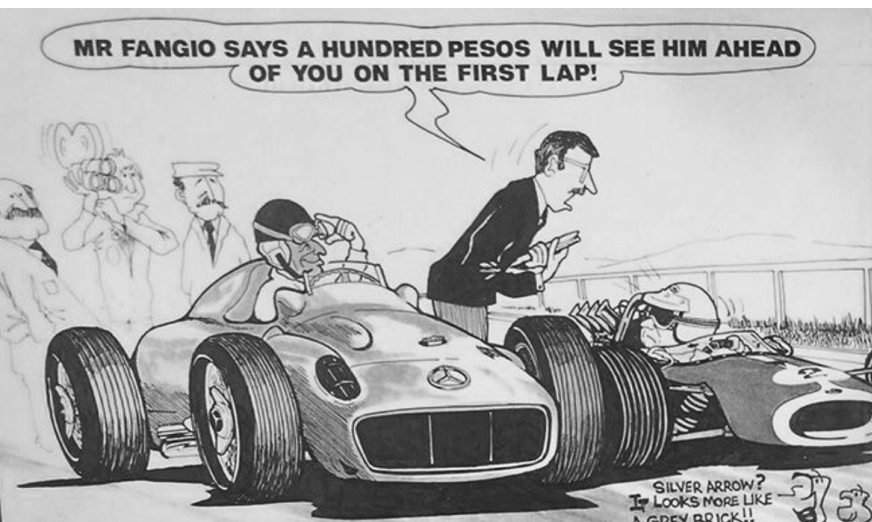
place, Evans scoring his first Toyota 86 win. Race 3 didn't start well with an off-track excursion of the opening lap, from that point the FAE/NAPA car was caught up in the mid-field battle. Ryan Wood scored his second win of the weekend, beating Evans home, Justin took the flag in 7th place after he failed to catch Murphy in the closing stages. A good weekend for the Allen Racing Team with a score card that read 5, 11, 7..

Meanwhile, down at Taupo. It was the 'Taupo Historic Grand Prix Celebrating Ford' meeting that included Round 2 of the 2021 SAS Autoparts MSC NZ F5000 Tasman Cup Revival Series. The club's two Formula 5000 drivers were in outstanding form at the Bruce McLaren Motorsport Park, the 'Feilding Flyers' were on the pace in qualifying and went even better in the racing. When qualifying ended Kevin Ingram had posted the third fastest time behind Michael Collins and Cody Banks while Tim Rush was quickest of the McLarens by more than two seconds and P8 on the grid. Race 1 was over 8 laps and saw Collins taking the flag 5.4 seconds ahead of Ingram's Lola T332, Rush and his M22 were the class of the McLarens, finishing 28 seconds ahead of Frank Karl's M10B and 8th overall. Race 2 was the spectacular rolling start handicap format where Tony Annabell scored his maiden win with a lights-to-flag victory from Tony Galbraith and last-man-away Collins who had an 11-position gain. Ingram crossed the line in 7th place, 6.04 seconds behind Annabell, Rush placed 10th. Race 3 was the longer 10 lap Taupo Historic Grand Prix with the field down to 11 starters, Collins was unchallenged and took the flag 2.9 seconds ahead of Ingram, Rush came home in P8 and again first of the McLarens. Well done Kevin, well done Tim...



Arise Sir Lewis. The name of Lewis Hamilton was included in the UK's Queen's New Year Honour's list for services to motorsports, the now seven-time world champion receiving a Knighthood in recognition of his record equalling / breaking achievements during the 2020 Formula 1 season. Hamilton became the fourth grand prix driver to receive the highest award following Sir Jack Brabham, Sir Jackie Stewart and Sir Stirling Moss, he is the first to be knighted while still racing. The Hamilton award will re-ignite discussion on the late great John Surtees, the only man to win world championships on both two and four wheels but was continuously overlooked to be recognised with a knighthood, though he had received the CBE (Commander of the Order of the British Empire). Based on basic figures Sir Lewis Hamilton is the best driver in motor racing history, but can the 36-year-old Briton be regarded as the GOAT (Greatest Of All Time)? Most periods in the 70-year history of F1 has had a dominant driver - Fangio, Clark, Prost, Senna, Schumacher, Hamilton. If you had to select the GOAT statistics show it would be Juan Manuel Fangio, the great Argentinian known as 'El Maestro'. He drove for four different teams between 1950 and 1958, winning five world championships (the last at 46 years of age), won 24 of his 51 grand prix starts, a strike rate of 46.15% that's unlikely to be matched by any other driver. Of course, times have changed, back in Fangio's days there were less than half of the grand prix races in a season compared to recent years. As for the GOAT, the debate will never end...

A very special moment. Juan Manuel Fangio was the invited guest at the 1978 Australian Grand Prix run at Sandown Raceway, it was the 50th Anniversary of the race. Mercedes-Benz sent out one of the all-



conquering grand prix racers from the mid-1950's which Fangio drove for three 'very spirited' demonstration laps. At the conclusion of the race he presented the Lex Davison Trophy to the winner, Formula 5000 ruler Graham McRae - 'meeting Fangio was a bigger thrill than actually winning the race for the third time'. Memories don't get much better than that...

Sign of the times. MNZ has confirmed that the 2021 New Zealand Formula Ford Championship will be held over just three rounds with the first at Hampton Downs on the 21st of this month. Round 2 will be at Pukekohe Park on 14 March with the final at Ruapuna Park on 01 May to coincide with the 40th Anniversary of the South Island Formula Ford Club. For so long Formula Ford has been one of the back bones of global racing, remember it was the category of choice for the NZGP between 2002 and 2005 when the country's premier open wheel race was held at Southland's Teretonga Park, the winner's names engraved on the trophy being Fabian Coulthard, Jonny Reid, Ken Smith and Simon Gamble. Those four years were sandwiched between the end of five years of Formula Holden and the beginning a current era with the Toyota Racing Series. How many drivers will contest this year's championship is a big question with several committing to the TRS. A matter of how far budgets will stretch...

Hoonigan changes. Twelve years ago, extrovert American rally driver Ken Block filmed a video called 'Gymkhana Practice' and put it on the Internet, it took off big time and led to a series of 'Gymkhana' videos. Filmed at global locations with the full co-operation of local authorities, the tyre smoking on-the-edge footage with its dramatic super-slow-motion hit YouTube in November 2008 with 15 million viewers, the next 8 episodes were watched 330 million times! Now the wheel has been handed to one of Block's former rally teammates, pro racer and Nitro Circus star Travis Pastrana with Block continuing his input with new concepts and venues while ensuring the level of excitement doesn't drop. Block actually challenged Pastrana to take on the role and the first video was shot in Pastrana's hometown of Annapolis in Maryland with a purpose-built 860 horsepower Subaru WRX STI. The new driver is a worthy successor, 'Gymkhana 11' is right up there with KB's best...



Bye bye Ford. Ken Block enjoys a huge social media following and his extrovert YouTube series had half a billion views between Gymkhana 3 and Gymkhana 10, for the past 10 years the American has enjoyed an exclusive partnership with the blue oval badge. That partnership began with global rallying and rallycross before Gymkhana was created with its increasingly wild vehicles like the NASCAR V8 powered 4WD 1968 Ford Mustang that was known as 'Hoonicorn', that was followed by the 'Hoonitruck', a Ford F150 pickup repowered with Ford GT 3½ litre twin-turbo V6, there was a Ford Fiesta based rally car and a 1996 Ford Escort Cosworth. With friend Travis Pastrana taking over the Gymkhana series Mr Block has no definitive plans for this year but has hinted that he could be back with 'one of his favourite rally cars of all time', the iconic Group B Audi Quattro S1. Bring it on...



An interesting French/British/China connection. The name Lotus represented all that was good in British motorsport, in F1 Team Lotus cars were fast and fragile but still collected seven Constructors and six Drivers world championship titles between 1958 and 1994. There were much leaner time between 2012 and 2015 for the reformed Lotus F1 outfit, 77 race starts for two wins and 25 podiums. Today the best of British is in name only, now owned by Chinese auto giant Geely, but there could be some exciting times ahead as Lotus has signed a memorandum of understanding with French maker Alpine to conduct a feasibility study with the objective of co-producing an all-electric sports car to take both brands into the future.

Alpine is really on the move under the direction of its new CEO, the brand has taken control of the Renault Sport performance road division and all racing operations including F1, this new project would align with his vision. Under Geely ownership Lotus has produced its first electric car at the original factory at Hethel in England, the Lotus Evija being limited to a production run of 130 units. Launched at the Guangzhou Auto Show in July 2019, no customers have taken delivery of the NZ\$3.8 million Evija due to delays caused by the COVID pandemic, but it should be worth waiting for with the four electric motors producing a combined 1470 kW or 1,970 horsepower in a car weighing 1,680 kilograms, the talk is 0-300 km/h in under 9 seconds! The top speed is 320 + km/h and the all-important range 400 kilometres. It would be likely that Alpine's thinking is for a car less potent, more mainstream and much cheaper...



*La passione per le auto da corsa rosse.* The passion for red racing cars remains very much alive in Italy despite the disappointing past season of their beloved Ferrari in grand prix racing. The year 2020 wasn't a good one for the famous Scuderia on the track, for the men and women of Maranello the highlight was the car presented for the team's 1000th grand prix start at Mugello in September, both SF1000s were burgundy in colour as a tribute to the team's early days. In December RM Sotheby, in partnership with Ferrari, held a weeklong 'Online-Only: Once in a Millenium' auction that offered 16 exclusive motorsport lots without reserve, all the items related to the landmark 2020 race, all were sold for an impressive total of 1,680,840 euros (NZ\$2,850,827).

A full-size F1 SF1000 show car without engine, gearbox, braking or electronic systems was the star lot of the auction, Charles Leclerc's # 16 was on the nose and Sebastian Vettel's # 5 on the vertical tail fin, both drivers' signed the car. The pre-sale high estimate was 200,000 euros, when bidding closed it was sold for a staggering 1,272,000 euros or NZ\$2,155,064! There are restrictions for the new owner, the car can only be used for private static displays. Most lots doubled their pre-sale estimates, signed driver's gloves sold for NZ\$21,500, a signed





Vettel race suit for NZ\$61,451, a signed Leclerc race suit was estimated to reach NZ\$25,600, it made NZ\$108,565! Both driver's replica helmets changed hands for NZ\$52,635, looking to the future Mick Schumacher's signed race suit reached NZ\$77,840. The 'tifosi' were prepared to pay top euro for memorabilia relating to the 2020 Tuscan Grand Prix, Scuderia Ferrari's 1000th race. La passione..

Return to S A? This year the COVID-19 pandemic will continue to cause problems for event organisers, but hopefully nothing like the scale of 2020. For decades Kiwi Formula 1 fans made the pilgrimage across the Tasman to attend the Australian Grand Prix, originally in Adelaide before the race shifted to Melbourne. Last year the virus caused the AGP to be cancelled at the last minute when all was ready to go, the same virus has again caused problems for the opening round of the 2021 championship that's scheduled for the 21st of next month, not cancelled, just postponed until later in the year. If the race had been canned there was a strong push for it to move back to South Australia, a state that has the virus under control. The owning Shahin family said that The Bend Motorsport Park could easily and quickly be upgraded to meet the FIA Grade 1 requirements as the circuit was built with that in mind, the facility has also been recognised for its excellence when it was named International Motorsport Facility of the Year in 2019 after only one year of operation. Creating Melbourne's Albert Park circuit is a massive and costly undertaking as it uses roads that are an integral part of the city's transport infrastructure, a public golf course and a park area, but Melbourne and the State of Victoria were never going let go of the AGP. Nice try Adelaide...



Musical chairs. This year's Repco Supercar Championship has seen more pre-season changes than anyone could have imagined with team personnel changes, driver changes, engineer changes and sponsor changes, leaving some teams with a lot of work to do before the new season starts. The departure of 3-time Supercar champion Scott McLaughlin and Team Penske boss Roger Penske from the Supercar scene seemed to set the ball rolling and led to a new driver line-up for the Shell V-Power team, putting Fabian Coulthard on the market, he was eventually picked-up by Team Sydney. Both Erebus Motorsport drivers said bye bye Betty with David Reynolds taking the Penrite sponsorship with him but he had nowhere to go. With Rick Kelly retiring there was a vacant seat but no word of who might fill it, Kelly Racing's next announcement was they had formed a partnership with the Grove Group after they purchased a shareholding. CEO Stephen Grove and his son Brenton are both very successful drivers competing in the Porsche Carrera Cup, GT Trophy and Mobil 1 Supercup Series and have been class winners in the Bathurst 12 Hour, so they know what the sport is all about. With their involvement the team was rebranded Kelly Grove Racing, soon followed by the confirmation that Reynolds would be Andre Heimgartner's new teammate in a Penrite liveried Ford Mustang. The moves kept coming and all the changes



mean there are some very good, experienced drivers on the side line with only the possibility of a co-driver role in the endurance races. Looking to the future there's exciting young talent emerging who are fully capable of pushing the big names and beating them, the next generation. Learning to juggle is now a prerequisite for teams and event organisers, but it's not easy to keep all the balls in the air at the same time...

Not to be. Hopes that the Manawatu Car Club would have two members as teammates in this year's Repco Supercar Championship were dashed when it was announced that Garry Jacobson would be driving the # 22 Team Sydney Holden Commodore, leaving Chris Pither without a fulltime drive. It also means that both of last year's Team Sydney drivers have been replaced as Fabian Coulthard is driving the Alex Davison Local Legends car. Jacobson won the 2016 Dunlop Super2 Series (Pither won the title in 2018) and it will be the 26-year-olds third Supercar season, he drove for Kelly Racing in 2019 and Matt Stone Racing last year, in 40 starts his best result is 7th at Sydney Motorsport Park in 2020. So where to now for our man, he's too good a talent to be wasted...

*Man with a plan.* Chris Pither will not be sitting back waiting for something to happen, it's not in his persona. 'I'm working hard to be back in the seat soon and with my great relationship with Coca Cola means we're looking for new opportunities. Watch this space.' Looking back Chris has enjoyed a long relationship with Garry Rogers Motorsport, he drove a Volvo S60 in the 2015 International V8 Supercar Championship, won the Dunlop Super2 Series in 2018 with GRM and the following year contested the inaugural TCR Australia Series driving a Renault Megane RS. Perhaps a return to TCR or S5000 with GRM in a bright red car with Coca Cola on its flanks? As the man said - watch this space...



Well deserved. Congratulations to one of this country's best drivers and great friend of Manfeild who was recognised for 'services to living' on Christmas Day when he was awarded the OBE - Over Bloody Eighty. Graeme Lawrence was one of the three drivers who 'shared' driving the Higgins scraper that turned the first sod for the circuit and quickly became a firm favourite with fans at the wheel of his Singapore Airlines sponsored Lola T332 Formula 5000, the car and crew always being immaculately presented. At one time Graeme was the fastest man to lap the 3.03-kilometre track when he made a special solo attempt, laps never to be forgotten as the noise from the un-muffled Lola reverberated off the corrugated iron fence along the back straight. We don't hear sound like that anymore...





Talking sound. With the move towards hybrid and all-electric vehicles quickly gathering momentum our world is quickly changing, but is it a better world? Engines are being seriously downsized to more highly efficient small capacity turbocharged motors, but they have one important element missing, a distinctive exhaust noise. In Europe the high-performance Audi RS5 and BMW M4 models now have six-cylinder engines while the 2021 Mercedes-AMG C63 S sports coupe could be the last of the breed with its 6.2 litre fuel injected V8 replaced by a smaller 4-litre twin-turbo V8, it's predicted that the next AMG C-class will swap the V8 for a boosted four cylinder! Performance houses like Mercedes-AMG were born on race tracks so what is their future...

Couldn't stay away. The Supercheap Auto name has been synonymous with motor racing for 25 years, in particular the long association with the Bathurst 1000. This year they lost the Supercar Championship naming right to rivals Repco but quickly bounced back by securing the naming rights to Australia's TCR Championship Series in a 5-year deal that includes partner status in the S5000 Australia Drivers Championship. The two categories run under the banner of the Australian Racing Group (ARG) together with the Touring Car Masters and Trans Am classes, the first of their 6-round Series was the Boost Mobile Race Tasmania meeting at the historic Symmons Plain circuit last month that was screened 'live' on New Zealand television by Sky Sport. ARG certainly have a great package of categories...

Interesting story revealed. The April 1994 issue of the MANZ 'Motorsport News' bulletin revealed that long time Steward and Club Patron Brian Davies got very close to an interesting overseas experience, the following is what was written in a brief article titled - Wet salt halts world record attempt: "An attempt at the world land speed record on Lake Gairdner near Adelaide in Australia has been abandoned due to unsuitable surface conditions. The cancellation is a good news/bad news for Palmerston North Steward Brian Davies. Brian had been on "super short notice" to fly over to the site and preside over the world record attempt as a neutral steward. Claiming a world record required a neutral "referee". However, conditions at the event would have been a far cry from trackside in New Zealand. It would have required Brian living in a tent for 10 days in temperatures of 40 deg Celsius plus waiting until the organisers felt the conditions were ideal. The attempt was initially to break the Australian record, then held by a jet powered truck. The record which in CAMS words was "not particularly fast" was duly broken, and the organisers and their jet-powered car then set their sights on Donald Campbell's record set in 1964, although the classes of car were totally different. This was achieved late one Saturday in March on the Salt Lake, which was steadily deteriorating as the water table rose". The jet powered car involved was 'Aussie Invader II' that was powered by an afterburning turbojet from a supersonic RAAF Dassault Mirage III fighter, the driver was drag racing record holder Rosco McGlashan. On 27 March 1994 McGlashan set a new Australian Land Speed record of 500 miles an hour (802.6 km/h) on Lake





Gairdner's dry salt flats, the record still stands today which backs the driver's claim of being 'the fastest Aussie on earth'. McGlashin certainly had a passion for speed, back in 1982 he drove a Go Kart to a world fastest speed of 253 miles an hour (407 km/h) using only 40% of the available power. The kart looked like a normal track racer with no streamline fairings, but a rocket motor had been installed behind the driver's seat! "It was an incredible feeling sitting in the thing with the fuel bubbling and gurgling just behind your head and then hitting the throttle. It was truly an awesome machine". Thinking back nearly thirty years it would have been a most interesting experience for our Mr Davies at Lake Gairdner, particularly the living in a tent bit...

Turning back the clock. Two interesting entries at this month's Skope Classic meeting at Ruapuna Park are Hawkes Bay father and son Greg and Ronan Murphy, two interesting cars as well. Greg has gone to the blue side again, this time to drive a Shell Ford Sierra Cosworth, the last of six cars built by Dick Johnson Racing. It was the # 17 Johnson/Bowe car in both the 1990 and 1991 Bathurst 1000 races and Dick's car in the 1992 Australian Touring Car Championship, it's now owned by a Christchurch businessman. Ronan will pedal a Nissan Primera Super Tourer that has previously been driven by Eric van de Poele, the Belgian drove the Team Repsol Nissan Primera in the 1996 TCR Spanish Touring Car Championship where he scored two wins and five podium places. As for bragging rights, the odds would surely favour Murph senior...



Moving with the times # 1. As the Aussie 'tin tops' move closer to Gen3 for 2022 comes word that the Supercars will trial 'push-to-pass' technology during the new season. Tenders are being called for the throttle-based overtaking system that is successfully used in Japan's premier open wheel formula where it's a much preferred option to Formula 1's DRS, a version is also used in Formula E. But push-to-pass is complex as the tender also requires an engine control unit, data recording system, data analysis software, video recording system, power control and distribution module, accident data recorder, global positioning system, telemetry system, shift light module, battery isolation relay and sensors for sourcing data. Add a complete new steering wheel with paddle shift switch mechanism capable of user configurable throttle blip and automatic shift modes. Of course the big question for teams and fans alike is will it make for better racing with more overtaking? The 'push-to-pass' trials will be watched with great interest..

Moving with the times # 2. Opened in 1979, Southwards Museum in Paraparaumu has one of the biggest and best private collections of vehicles in the Southern Hemisphere. Over the past few years there have been important additions of modern supercars that have more appeal to the younger generation with names like Ferrari, Lamborghini, Shelby Mustang and McLaren joining the 1895 Benz Velo, Bugattis, Bentleys, Cadillacs and the like. The latest addition is a state-of-the-art tribute to museum



founder Sir Len Southward that incorporates electronic touch screens. Another good reason to pay a visit..

*Part of the learning curve. Tickford Racing Supercar driver Cam Waters is honing his skills with a 10-meeting summer programme behind the wheel of an 800-horsepower winged Sprint car at his local Timmins Speedway in Mildura. His first night started well by posting the third fastest time in the 29-car field during the hot laps qualifying session, in the heats he would start from the back because of his rookie status. His first sprintcar race ended with a first lap mishap, he was sprayed with clay from the track surface and ran into the outside wall, damaging the right front corner of the car. The cause, lack of vision, he couldn't remove his visor tear-off quickly enough. A lesson learned...*

Rule Britannia. Last month super scribe Richard Bosselman was enjoying the delights of the new all-electric Mini, known as the Mini Electric in its homeland and the Mini Cooper SE elsewhere. The first pure electric small car has all of the elements of the petrol Cooper S, the 135 kW (182 bhp) electric powertrain uses the same engine mounts! The range is around 250 kms with a 35-minute charge time to 80% capacity, zero to 100 in 7.3 seconds and top speed of 150 km/h (93 mph), remember that it's basically a city car, not designed for racing or rallying like some of its predecessors. Not surprisingly it's very retro inside and out, the off-white press car would certainly stand out in a crowd with its bright lime green highlighting, there are also had some nice touches. The aerodynamic wheels look like a 3-pin plus socket, when the driver's door is opened the Mini logo is illuminated on the ground, but the really clever bit is that when the lights are turned on each taillight pattern is in the form of half the Union Jack flag. But you would expect something clever for 60 grand...



*A really good night. Despite a number of the regulars missing because of the holiday season the January Track & Yak had a good turnout with several new faces making their way to the Rose and Crown. Bryce Hogg and Alice Staddon are regulars, so are Jeff and Chrissy Braid, but chief scrutineer Rod McArdle and his wife Amber were welcomed into the group, so too were Jeremy Hoskins and Richard Bosselman, to cap off the night Brian Green walked through the door and kept everyone very entertained talking about some of his rally experiences. Brian has agreed to do a 'Night with ..... ..' in the coming months, not to be missed. The T&Y is for everyone, it would good to see you there...*

Lads in leather. Jeremy Hoskins likes nothing more than straddling his Triumph Speed Twin and heading out to feel the rush of passing air, on a nice day of course. The Speed Twin is one of the most famous model names in motorcycle history that dates back to 1938 when Edward Turner designed his parallel twin masterpiece, 45,000 units left the line before production ended in 1966. Jerry's bike has a much bigger engine, is much more powerful and much more refined than the original Speed Twin but is still a true classic. Meanwhile Bryce Hogg opted for a Korean machine manufactured by Hyosung who were



established in 1974 to make Suzukis. The Hogg Hyosung GV 650 Aquila is a 650cc liquid-cooled V-Twin with a high-level spec, alongside in the garage is his back-up machine, a 50cc Yamaha Pasol scooter. Bit of a contrast there...

Another F1 rallyist. Kimi Raikkonen has been there done that at WRC level with the Citroen Junior Team in 2010 and 2011, fellow Finlander Valtteri Bottas also enjoys the challenge of rallying - it must be in a Finn's blood. Last month Valtteri competed in the Arctic Lapland Rally for the third time, the opening round of this year's Finnish Championship and brought into the World Rally Championship as a replacement for the cancelled Rally Sweden. The two-day Arctic Lapland is a snow and ice event (Rally Finland in July is gravel because its summer time) and it was the first time that the WRC has ventured inside the Arctic Circle where temperatures drop to minus 30 degrees Celsius in February. In previous outings Bottas finished 5th in 2019 driving a Ford Fiesta WRC, last year he drove a Citroen DS3 WRC and placed 9th after a bad start to the event. Was it a case of third time lucky? To help, partner Tiffany Cromwell designed a special helmet as no regular sponsors were involved. At the end of the rally with 225.9 kilometres of seven stages the Citroen DS3 WRC of Valtteri and co-driver Timo Rautianen were in sixth place 3.48.3 behind the winner Juho Hanninen who won six of the stages in his Toyota Yaris WRC, three Skoda Fabia Rally2 Evos were in the top five placings. The Arctic Lapland is a popular event in the Scandinavian countries with 128 starters, 95 made it to the finish. A little research reveals two other F1 drivers have participated in rallying, in 2013 Robert Kubica was the WRC2 Championship, while Carlos Sainz Jnr drove the VIP course car during the 2018 Monte Carlo Rally, his father was a two-time winner of the WRC title, with regular co-driver Luis Moya he won the New Zealand Rally three times (19991, 1992, 1998) driving for Toyota. For a Formula 1 driver rallying with its vastly different skills really puts their reputation on the line...



Five Big Macs, no chips. Last month's Taupo Historic Grand Prix meeting was the first time in 18 years that five McLaren Formula 5000 cars have been on the same grid in our country. It was an impressive line-up for Round 2 of the SAS Autoparts MSC Tasman Cup Revival Series, the first round was at Manfeild in November. Looking at the McLarens there was a M10A low wing, a M10A high wing, two M10B models and the Rush Collection M22. Going back to the early days of Formula 5000, there were four McLarens in the



field for the 1970 NZGP, the following year there were seven. Australian Frank Matich (M10A) won the 1970 race, compatriot Neil Allen (M10B) took the checker in 1971. Then the Elfin, Lola and McRae came along...

*Two can go into one. Three races, two race cars, two race meetings, same day - that was the story of Angus Fogg last month with the NZGP at Hampton Downs and the Ford supported Historic meeting at Taupo. How do you manage that, the answer was a helicopter. The third round of the NAPA Central Muscle Cars was part of the undercard for the NZGP, after the first race Foggy was choppered to Taupo to join the Historic Sports Sedan and Allcomers grid in the ex-Ian Algie Chev Alfetta, then back to the Waikato for the second CMC race in the flame-throwing Ford Mustang. His first race was at 11.45am, his third at 4.10pm. The helicopter made it easy to do as it's only a short flight between the two circuits as the pilot flies a direct line with no SH1 traffic to contend with. Just another day at the office...*

BRG back. With the rebranding of Racing Point to Aston Martin Racing and prime sponsor BWT being replaced by Cognizant (a US-based digital technology company with 166 global locations that employ over 280,000 people) the pink cars disappear from the F1 grid this year replaced by British Racing Green. Green has been the international racing colour of the United Kingdom since the 1901-1905 Gordon Bennett Cup races when participating countries were allocated a colour to make their cars more easily identifiable - France blue, Belgium yellow, Germany white, USA red - Italy adopted red in 1907 after winning the Peking to Paris race with the USA changing to blue with a white stripe or vice versa. Green is regarded by many as an unlucky colour but the grand prix record book disproves that, look at the great success of

makes like Cooper, Vanwall, Lotus and Brabham when their cars were presented in variations of green, but that was more than half a century ago, Aston Martin's green grand prix challenger that appeared in 1955 was much less successful. In the last 38 years there has been seven teams who presented their cars in a green colour - Tyrrell (1983), Alfa Romeo (1985), Jordan (1991), Benetton (1994), Forti (1996) and Jaguar (2003), the last occasion was Caterham in 2014. So BRG will return to Formula 1 racing on a marque whose last open wheel appearance was actually here in New Zealand, in 1956 when Reg Parnell brought out the single-seat DB3R to contest the International Series. The 2.5 litre supercharged engine blew up during testing and was replaced by a 3.0 litre sports car motor, the NZGP was a DNS for the car but not the driver as Parnell finished 5th in a Cooper Jaguar sports car 'loaned' by friend Peter Whitehead, back in the Aston Martin Parnell finished 4th at Wigram, 2nd at Dunedin and 3rd at Ryal Bush in Southland. The 'down under' campaign deemed a success...



Another OMG. Ballistics is defined as the study of the flight of projectiles, there is a projectile on the road that redefines the rules. Three years ago, Japanese engineering firm Aspark began development of an all-electric battery-powered sports car, their goal was to create the fastest accelerating electric car. The concept vehicle was unveiled at the 2017 Frankfurt Auto Show and the production version at the 2019 Dubai International Motor Show where it was known as the Aspark OWL. A limited production run of fifty cars was scheduled to be



built by Italian company Manifattura Automobili Torino last year until COVID-19 interfered with plans. In line with current thinking the chassis and bodywork are carbon fibre with a stainless-steel support structure incorporated into the roof to increase strength, incorporated in the design is an active rear wing. The double wishbone suspension features hydraulic damper and torque vectoring and to cope with the level of performance the carbon-ceramic brakes have 10-piston (!) calipers at the front and 4-piston at the rear. Propulsion is via four electric motors producing an output of 1,480 kW (1,984 hp) and a staggering 2,000 Nm of torque which means it's time to stand back from the launch pad to avoid the blast - zero to 100 is gone in an astonishing 1.9 seconds, in 10.6 seconds the driver is doing 300 (186 mph) and well on the way to the 400 km/h (249 mph) top speed, that makes the 4.8 x 1.9 x 0.9 metre manned missile the world's fastest accelerating production car. The Tesla Roadster was the first to break the magic two seconds to 100, is Elon Musk up for the challenge to go faster...

Swiss Miss returning to Indy. Simone de Silvestro was unknown to most when she appeared for Kelly Racing in 2017 behind the wheel of the Harvey Norman Nissan Altima, bringing a new interest during her three years in the Virgin Australia Supercar Championship and showing numerous times that she is a real racer who isn't afraid to mix it with boys. Simone departed Australia to be a Porsche factory driver, testing their Formula E car and being part of the Porsche GT Masters programme, this year she's also returning to the 'brickyard' for the sixth time in her career. In the 2010 Indy 500 she finished 14th and was named 'Rookie of the Year', two years later she joined Sarah Fisher and Danica Patrick to become one of the three women who have stood on an Indycar podium. De Silvestro will be driving for car owner Beth Paretta whose team has an alliance with Team Penske which means the Captain will have five cars under his command with Josef Newgarden, Will Power, Simon Pageneud and rookie Scott McLaughlin piloting the four in-house entries. Beth Paretta - "IndyCar has been a leader and a welcoming place for women for many years because of the hard work of many women and men before us, but now we have a stronger commitment with IndyCar's 'Race for Equality and Change' to make sure opportunities continue in the future. Our team, along with our technical alliance with Team Penske, will work hard to give Simona the best car we can provide so she can achieve her best results. Competition drives us, the Indy 500 is the greatest race in the world, and one day soon we hope to have a woman's face on the Borg-Warner Trophy". Two ladies on a mission...



A new giant joins the giants. Last month's formation of the world's newest car company was a huge step for the industry with Stellantis becoming the fourth largest behind Toyota, Volkswagen Group and Hyundai-Kia. Registered in the Netherlands with its headquarters in Amsterdam, Stellantis is now an American-European-based multinational automotive manufacturing corporation that resulted from the merger of France's PSA Group and Italian-American Fiat Chrysler Automobiles. Stellantis might only be the # 4 largest but it's still very big with 400,000 employees and a presence in more than 130 countries, thirty having manufacturing facilities, total annual production is currently 8 million vehicles. The brand portfolio is impressive with three of the marques founded in the 1800's - Opel 1862, Peugeot 1882 and Fiat 1899. The five American labels are Chrysler, Dodge, Jeep, Mopar and RAM, on the other side of the Atlantic are Abarth, Alfa Romeo, Citroen, DS, Fiat, Lancia, Maserati, Opel, Peugeot and Vauxhall. One positive side of the merger will be savings of up to 5 billion euros (NZ\$8.43 billion) annually through economies-of-scale and other shared resources which is a big step in the right direction, the group also plans to have 39 electrified vehicles in their range by the end of this year. The name Stellantis is derived from the Latin verb 'stello' and means 'brightens with stars' - perhaps a



prediction of the new group's future..

# STELLANTIS



Debut cancelled. TCR replaces the BNT V8s as the New Zealand Touring Car Championship and the inaugural series was scheduled to begin at Manfeild Circuit Chris Amon on 23/24 of last month 13/14 but the lack of entries meant the plug had to be pulled. The 2-litre turbocharged FWD production cars are tightly controlled with regard to their specification, they were introduced to Australia last year and proved to be an immediate success with so many makes and models, close racing and name drivers. There were great expectations for our shores, Manfeild was to be the only North Island round before the teams crossed Cook Strait for three South Island rounds, the list of cars and drivers is yet to be finalised but it appears that the Hyundai i30 N TCR could dominate the entry with three cars (Hayden Paddon, Rhys Gould, Gene Rollinson) to run against a Honda Civic Type R TCR (Jordan Michels), an Audi RS 3 LMS TCR (Jack Milligan) and two Kia Cee'd TCRs (TBA), but how accurate is that? All very messy, not a good start for TCR on our side of the Tasman...

Much better news across the ditch. The same weekend as TCR was to debut at Manfeild the opening round of their Australian Championship took place at the historic Symmons Plains circuit in Tasmania. A field of 18 cars with some very interesting Supercar names like Chaz Mostert, Michael Caruso, Tony D'Alberto, James Moffatt and Lee Holdsworth behind the wheel, add to those former Bathurst 1000 winner Jason Bargwanna. The opening round of VHT \$5000 Australian



*Drivers Championship was also on the programme, their racing highlighted by Thomas Randle winning the Feature race and breaking the outright lap record of 50.1 seconds that was set 41 years ago by Alfredo (Alfie) Costanzo in a Lola T430 Formula 5000. The 2017 TRS champion quickest lap was 49.864 lap, three tenths of a second in four decades is not a big improvement. At the same meeting the evergreen John Bowe recorded his 100<sup>th</sup> Touring Car Masters win. That's some achievement...*

Supercheap Auto has flown the coop. S.A has gone from a blue nest to a red nest for the Repco Supercar Championship, leaving the Ford Mustang of Tickford Racing for a Triple Eight Holden Commodore. The multi-year deal sees Supecheap Auto and ToolPro joining primary sponsors Red Bull and Ampol on the cars of Jamie Whincup and Shane Van Gisbergen, further expanding its motorsport portfolio after losing the high-profile Supercar naming rights to the opposition. Supercheap Autos hit back by quickly linking with the flourishing international TCR category. The auto accessory battle for supremacy continues...

*Interesting backing. One of cars in the NZGP race was supported by the 'Kiwi Driver Fund' that recognises up-and-coming NZ motorsport driving talent and gives them a financial boost to compete on the world stage and receive international recognition. It was car # 50, the driver was Kenny Smith. Retirement out of the question then...*

Snake bite. Carroll Shelby's personal 1965 427 Cobra went up for sale last month, realising NZ\$8.2 million, a healthy premium over similar spec cars. According to the presale information CSX3178 was supplied by AC Cars in Thames Ditton in November 1965 and the internal Shelby America build order for the car was raised in January 1966. Supplied as a trimmed rolling body it was delivered to Carroll in Dallas in March 1966 with a 427 and 4 speed toploader installed, the invoice showing the price at \$6088 plus \$185 in freight. In 1972 Shelby had the car repainted from its original Charcoal Grey to blue with a gold nose and also fitted an alloy head 427 side oiler engine and auto box. Later still in 2002 the car was repainted red. The car stayed with Shelby until his death in 2012 and was sold by the estate in 2016 to its current owner who has had the car completely restored to its original specification as it was delivered to Shelby in 1966.



Quote of the month: "I'm not arguing, I'm just explaining why I'm right"  
RH



# WHAT HAPPENED AT HD



Early betting for the NZGP at the TAB had Shane Van Gisbergen installed as the favourite for the big race followed by Andre Heimgartner and Chris van der Drift. So how accurate were the punters after the first day of the meeting?

The first practice session was split into two groups of eight cars, Greg Murphy posting the fastest lap in his group, Brendan Leitch was quicker in the other group with SVG P3 while Chris van de Drift was down in P8. In the second session van der Drift got his head down to go to the top ahead of Leitch, Matthew Payne and Heimgartner, SVG dropped to P7 and Murphy to P11. The third 30-minute session ended with the order van der Drift, Payne, Leitch, Heimgartner and SVG, Murphy improved to be 8th quickest and 9/10ths ahead of the MCC's Kaleb Ngatoa who had burst out the pack. There was one final session that saw van der Drift still posting the fastest times, the big mover was Daniel Gaunt who suddenly came into the reckoning and was second quickest by 0.235, SVG and the impressive Ngatoa were P3 and P4 ahead of Payne and Leitch, Heimgartner was back in 8th and Murphy 12th, thirteen of the sixteen cars being within one second of van der Drift's time. Sadly, right off the pace was Kenny Smith, the closest the popular veteran got to the fastest time in a session varied between 7.24 and 8.9 seconds.

Qualifying for the weekend's first two races resulted in van der Drift and SVG on the front row of the grid for Race 1, with rookies Payne and Ngatoa sharing Row 2, Gaunt slipped back to 7th which was two places ahead of Heimgartner, Murphy was further back in 12th. In the Q session for Sunday morning's Race 2 SVG pulled a big one out of the bag with a sensational last sector on his final lap that put him on pole position with van der Drift joining him on the front row, Payne and Ngatoa were again 3rd and 4th quickest, Gaunt dropped to 8th with Heimgartner right behind him while Murphy improved one spot to 11th.

Race 1 was a 20-lapper that saw SVG take the lead on lap 6 and score a narrow win over van der Drift who shadowed the Bathurst 1000 winner to the flag, 0.579 was the winning margin. Seven seconds back were



Payne, Leitch and Ngatoa, the latter having a wild ride across the grass at Turn 1 on the opening lap. Heimgartner and Gaunt were 6th and 7th, Murphy 13th, Joshua Bethune retired with seven laps to run which elevated Ken Smith to 15th, albeit a lap down.

Sunday was the big day with Race 2, qualifying for the 66th NZGP and the big race itself. The race was another 20-lapper but conditions were very different with a wet track, only 10 of the 16 cars completed the race that ended under a yellow caution, Van Gisbergen crossing the line ahead of van der Drift, Payne and Ngatoa - among the DNF's were the big names of Heimgartner, Gaunt, Murphy and Smith. In the closing stages of the race Heimgartner and Brendon Leitch were together and went into the Hairpin side-by-side, Leitch lost control and there was wheel contact which resulted in two DNFs, it also resulted in a double thumb fracture and torn ligaments for Heimgartner who had a tight hold of his steering wheel, the impact bending his thumb back. Ice packs and pain killers were called for.

It was also wet for the 15-minute qualifying session, initially lap times were around 15 seconds slower but half way through the session a car was in a gravel trap which brought out the red flag. When the circuit went green the field was split on tyre selection, some ran slicks while others opted for wet tyres. Despite no change in the weather the times came down with Murphy at the top of the board. With four minutes remaining, the shuffle began with Gaunt going quicker, then van der Drift before Ngatoa delivered a blockbuster final lap in the dying seconds to clock 1.44.288, edging Gaunt by 0.065 of a second, van der Drift and Payne would be on the second row of the grid, followed by Murphy and Conrad Clark. Heimgartner was P8 and SVG P10 but only 0.881 behind Ngatoa while Smith was 15.547 off the pole time, it was a session that threw predictions out the door.



By now van Gisbergen had emerged as the bookies favourite and was paying \$2.20 at the TAB, van der Drift was going for \$4.50, polesitter Ngatoa \$8 and Kenny Smith \$61 for the win.

The 2021 New Zealand Grand Prix will be remembered for much more than Kenny Smith's 50th start in a race that was surely the most extraordinary in its history with so much action throughout the 28 laps and before the race actually began, a vast contrast from recent years when overtakes have been few and far between. It all started pre-race when SVG set-off his car's onboard fire extinguisher necessitating a clean-up and refill which took time and he missed the pit lane exit cut-off, forcing the TAB favourite to start from pit lane. What followed was sensational, weaving his way through the field from last to first inside 18 laps with



15 overtakes and a couple of wheel banging passes! Ngatoa made the best start from pole in what was a frantic opening lap with three lead changes, ending with the order Gaunt, Ngatoa, van der Drift, Heimgartner and Murphy who led briefly, by the end of lap 4 SVG was up to 12th place but progress was slowed on lap 6 when a 'parked' car caused the Safety Car to be deployed. Back to green on lap 10 with the order Gaunt from Ngatoa, Heimgartner and Payne with SVG 9th and the charge continuing, up to 4th on lap 14 and on the podium a lap later, another lap and he deposed Heimgartner for 2nd, next time round he was leading after passing Gaunt at the Hairpin, Heimgartner also made the pass before Gaunt began to drift back into the pack. Van Gisbergen drew away to score the most remarkable win of his career by 2.2 seconds over Heimgartner, teenagers Matthew Payne and Kaleb Ngatoa were 3rd and 4th after an intense fight with van der Drift and Damon Leitch competing the top six finishers and within 10.4 seconds of the winner, Gaunt crossed the line in P8, Murphy P10 and Smith P15, a lap down with just the one DNF - The Giz modestly described the win as "one of my best".



In so many ways it was an NZGP like no other and created in unusual circumstances, there was drama, lead changes and brilliant overtakes before the bookies favourite took the chequered flag against the odds. For Shane van Gisbergen it was another display of his remarkable talent and it was a special moment when he was presented with the 100-year-old New Zealand Motor Cup that was the trophy for the annual 50-mile race on Muriwai Beach that carried the Australasian Beach Championship title. Following an agreement with the New Zealand International Grand Prix (NZIGP) it was the first time the NZ Motor Cup had been competed for since 1991 with the last two names to be engraved those of Ken Smith and Craig Baird - it was so unfortunate that Hampton Down's owner Tony Quinn wasn't there to witness the race that he had dreamed of and made possible.

Now there is the question - was it the greatest drive seen in a motor race in this country? Let the arguments begin.

It was a very good weekend in the Waikato for the Manawatu Car Club with a new star emerging by the name of Kaleb Ngatoa who has made the open-wheel transition from Formula First to Formula Ford and now to the Castrol Toyota Racing Series. Is the Marton-born 19-year-old the first driver with star quality to emerge from the Rangitikei District since the late Chris Amon? ....

RH



Forget the lap times and the results, the 2021 NZGP was about the occasion for a driver achieving what no-one else has done and no one will ever do, participating in his home internationally recognised Grand Prix for the 50th time.

The New Zealand Grand Prix is a race that he has won three times, uniquely driving cars from three different categories - Formula 5000 (1976), Formula Ford (1990) and the Toyota Racing Series (2004). Add to the list the Penang Grand Prix (3 times), Selangor Grand Prix (twice) and Malaysian Grand Prix (once), six times winner of the New Zealand Gold Star Championship.

He first competed in 1958 at 16 years of age and won the New Zealand Hill Climb Championship, four years later he raced a Lola Formula Junior that was his first open-wheeler. His name became synonymous with Formula 5000 racing on both sides of the Tasman, age did not slow him down despite major crashes at Manfeild and Pukekohe, the La Valise Travel Lola T332 being as well-known as its driver.

Made a Member of the Order of the British Empire (MBE) in 1987 and inducted into the New Zealand Motorsport Hall of Fame in 1995 in recognition of his service to our sport, also remember what he has done for motor racing by mentoring and encouraging young drivers who have gone on to achieve on the global stage, the names of Scott Dixon and Brendon Hartley immediately come to mind.

Long-time friend of Manfeild and Honorary Member of the Manawatu Car Club, Kenneth James Smith MBE, we salute you...

RH









## HONDA REHAB – Part 3

The grocery wagon comes to Manfeild

# HONDA

It's early 2020 and the year was shaping up to be one to forget. Lockdown was about to start, forced home detention. There was a requirement for a project of the vehicular kind to keep me entertained during the times we were not going to be allowed out, and a Honda Accord got my attention. How well do you reckon a wagon can go round Manfeild? Fast, slow, boat-like, brake killer? I know how to find out!

T'was 10:30pm on the night before lockdown and the new project arrives outside. I jump up and head outside 'for a moment' while Sam is wondering what the hell is going on. We're busy with other things given the gravity of the lockdown situation and forget all about it. The next morning Sam's attitude could best be described as not surprised, slightly intrigued, but mostly not impressed. A silver Honda Accord wagon is still there outside our place, leaking substantial quantities of oil. I've definitely purchased another fix-er-upper!

There's plenty to get into with this gem, so the list is created, and it's a big one. Blown head gasket for a start, massive oil leak somewhere, CV joint unhappy, front suspension clunking away, rear shock blown, plus a host of other things. Lucky we've got a few weekends and evenings free huh...

As soon as we're finished with home detention it's off for a WOF. Excellent news, we've fixed all the important stuff and now we're ready for the now common work out on track and determine whether this Accord will turn into something entertaining, and also a competitive piece of automotive intrigue. The Honda Accord wagon embarks on the challenge of her life, with four full rounds of the FAE Winter Series. We find some additional issues along the way like a failing speed sensor that removes the all-important VTEC ability in the first round, but as I've learnt from seasons prior, often it comes down to reliability and consistency, not just outright wins. The wagon finishes every single race, every round. It goes fast and it goes slow, but it doesn't stop, and it collects points all the way.

And the most important learning for me out of this particular season was just how much fun you can have with the most unlikely car. I have to say the season in the Honda wagon was my most enjoyable to date and it comes down to time in the seat closely competing with others. Rounds 2, 3 and 4 served up close, competitive racing every single race. I couldn't believe how enjoyable it was dicing with Warren Cleland and Paul Rodgers (and later Ernie Greenwell) lap after lap, race after race. Big cars with weight and

horsepower vs little light cars with less. Cornering ability vs acceleration, braking points vs top speed. It's part of the attraction and sometimes frustration of open class racing, but when you're out there with friends it takes a fair bit of beating!

Gareith







Following overnight rain the weather was fine for Round 2 following overnight rain, the grey skies turned to blue and with the 20 plus degree temperature it made for a very pleasant day at Manfeild Circuit Chris Amon. Additions to the weekend's programme were championship rounds for the IRC SS2000/KSports and SuperSix categories that drew a combined 13 entries. The four Mitre 10 Mega Summer Series classes attracted a total of 52 entries, many familiar faces were missing (at Taupo or Hampton Downs?), partially offset by an encouraging number of first-time appearances.

In the RS Cup entries were down by two from Round 1 to 10 with only two MPVs in the field this time, qualifying ended with Dave Burroughs at the top of the sheet and 2.7 seconds clear of Ernie Greenwell, third quickest was Darren Walker's Daihatsu Sirion 3/10ths back, followed by Alice Staddon and Rodney Penn, the first five car covered by 3.93 seconds. Gareith Stanley was next with a 1.7 second advantage over Bryce Hogg in the battle of the MPVs.

The Scratch race saw Greenwell leading at the end of the opening lap from Walker, Staddon, Penn, Hogg and Stanley, Burroughs completely missed the start, joining the field two laps down. Next time round Penn had jumped two positions to second, further back there was the overtake of the day with newbie Carl Pritchard leading the two MPVs into the esses, at the apex the two Odysseys passed the Corolla, one on each side with no touching! Brilliant. There was little change in the running order, Greenwell led by 1.4 seconds from Penn, Walker and Staddon with a gap to Stanley, Pritchard and Hogg, at the back of the pack David Penfold and Brian Kouvelis were engaged in their own private battle, Peugeot versus BMW. The Hogg MPV headed for the pits at the end of lap 5 and the race ended with Greenwell ahead of Penn by 1.3 seconds with a 6½ second gap to Walker who Staddon in close attendance, more than half a minute were Stanley and Pritchard while Kouvelis comfortably won his battle with Penfold, Burroughs was two laps down but did set the fastest lap time.

That late start put Burroughs on P1 for the Reverse Grid with Penfold alongside, Kouvelis and Pritchard were on row 2 with Stanley next and on his own, Hogg was out for the day. Not surprisingly Burroughs had a lights-to-flag win, but it wasn't without its drama, behind him were Penn and Staddon followed by Walker, Greenwell, Stanley and Pritchard. No change at the halfway mark but the lead had extended out to 5.3 seconds, by the end of lap 5 it was 8 seconds but Burroughs had incurred a 10 second penalty for breaking out, he had to push but not go under 1.30 again. The race ran out with no positional changes, with great judgement Burroughs took the flag and the win by half a second over, Staddon was 9/10ths back in third with a surprising margin of 12 seconds to Greenwell and Stanley.

Fifty-five seconds covered the field for the start of the Handicap, Penfold had a 15 second start over Kouvelis and Pritchard, down the back Staddon, Greenwell and Penn started 5 seconds ahead of Burroughs. The timekeepers had done an outstanding job with regard to the handicapping, Burroughs taking the lead on the final lap to cross the line 1½ seconds ahead of Pritchard, a smaller gap to Greenwell, Walker edged

past Penfold on the line by 0.065 followed by Kouvelis and Stanley, all six covered by 6.55 seconds. But Burroughs had three transgressions and that 30 seconds took him from P1 to P9, giving Carl Pritchard his first win at his first meeting with the others all moving up one position.

There was an impressive 22 cars on the SF Cup grid, only two less than Round 1, the 10 minute qualifying session was sensational with the timing system going into overdrive to keep up with the leader board changes, when the checker fell 19 cars were covered by 4.7 seconds, the fastest eight by less than a second! Jarrod Smith was top of the list followed by Gareith Stanley, Denis Churcher, Vaughan Campbell, Samantha Stanley, Trent Smith, Liam How and Tony Stewart. Jonathan Hogg was best of the rest 1.17 off the pace and ahead of Blair Carswell, Tessa Field and Johan de Villiers, another four cars within 6/10ths of each other. Would qualifying translate to close racing?

After starting P7 How led at the end of a frantic opening lap in the Scratch race from G Stanley, J Smith, S Stanley, Campbell, T Smith, Churcher and Hogg, S Stanley moved to third after passing J Smith on lap 2, further back Hogg advanced to 7th followed by Carswell and Churcher. G Stanley took over the front running in lap 3 from How, J Smith was back in front of S Stanley and Carswell was ahead of Hogg. Campbell was the man on the move going from 5th to 2nd on lap 4 and followed by How, J Smith, S Stanley and Carswell, Daryl Hunter pulled off the track approaching Higgins, his race over. Out front there were no problems for leader Gareith Stanley, the Integra pedaller had things under control to take the checker 3.9 seconds ahead of Liam How with ½ a second back to Jarrod Smith, Samantha Stanley held out the fast finishing Hogg to claim 4th place, with Churcher leading home a five car pack. That was the official result after Carswell and Campbell picked up time penalties by breaking out, dropping them to 16th and 18th respectively.

That result made the Reverse Grid a lot more than interesting, Hunter was alone on the front row with Trevor Weir and Wessam Bessada behind him, down the back were Gareith Stanley and Liam How with Jarrod Smith and Samantha Stanley in front of them. The 6-lapper quickly settled down with Hunter leading the first two laps from Bessada, Weir, Craig O'Brien who had started P8, then the hard charging How, Hilary Ashworth and Kayne Anderson. Bessada hit the front on the next lap when Hunter pulled off the circuit for his 2nd DNF of the day, pulling out a 4 second lead over Weir who had O'Brien on his back bumper, then How, Lance Prouse who started mid-field and Ashworth. At the end of lap 4 there was no change in the top six running order but Chapman was up to 7th ahead of Hogg, Carswell and Tony Stewart, next time round the lead was out to 6.7 seconds, Prouse got ahead of Weir and O'Brien was under pressure from Trent Smith, Chapman and Hogg. Rouse had narrowed the gap behind Bessada to 4½ seconds at the flag with a 2.7 gap to Weir in 3rd place, next home were How and Trent Smith split by 2/10ths chased by O'Brien, Carswell and Hogg, the latter 10.2 seconds behind the winner and 17 cars less than 20 seconds behind the winner.

Two outstanding races with the Handicap to come, alone on the front row was Hunter, five seconds to Ashworth, Louis Kelly, Mark Smith, Trevor Weir and O'Brien, another five seconds back were Anderson, Johan De Villiers, and Tessa Field, 20 seconds from the front and on his own was Vaughan Campbell who had the Carswell RX7 5 seconds in front of him. For the first two laps Hunter led Weir, Ashworth, O'Brien, Field, Mark Smith and How, next time round Hunter was missing handing the lead to Weir, Field had gained three spots and was second ahead of Ashworth, Anderson jumped from 7th to 4th ahead of How, Bessada, Trent Smith, De Villiers and Churcher. The changes kept coming on lap 4 with Bessada moving up to 3rd, both How and Anderson got past Ashworth as the tempo of the race increased, it was building up to a grandstand finish. On the final lap Field slipped past Weir on the intermediate straight to take the lead, behind the pair the changes kept coming, streaming out of the final corner it was blur of sound and colour as Field crossed the line 1.2 seconds ahead of Bassada followed by How, Weir, De Villiers, Anderson, Churcher, Prouse and Samantha Stanley who were less than 10 seconds behind the winner with Carswell and Hogg half a second back. Great handicapping, great race.



Twelve IB Cup cars was only two less than the opening round in December, qualifying produced another amazing session with all the cars covered by 8.04 seconds, 11 by 4.9 seconds. It was all about tenths of a second, Hamish Paterson took top spot from Simon Hetterscheid by 0.606, Nathan Spencer and Nick Stewart were 1½ seconds away from Paterson, David Anstis and Donald McIntyre less than 3 seconds, David Coe, Ian Humphrey and Graham Moody less than four, Gerald Watson and Matthew Elliott under five. At the bottom of the page was Kolin Yannakis at 8.043.

There was a dramatic start to the Scratch race, one car was missing when the field formed on the grid, P8 was empty, with a hiss and roar the Humphrey XR8 charged down pit lane in a bid to catch-up but the race started when he was halfway round the circuit! Starting from P7 Coe led at the end of the first lap from McIntyre who was alongside Coe on the grid, Paterson held third from Stewart, Spencer, Watson and Anstis. Lap 2 saw Paterson take over 2nd, Spencer improved to 4th with Anstis behind him and pushing Watson back a place, another lap the order was Paterson, Coe and McIntyre running in close formation with Stewart ahead of Spencer and Anstis, Humphrey pitted at the end of the lap. Hetterscheid had drifted back from his front row start but was now in full racing mode and on a huge forward charge, getting up to 2nd before McIntyre put a great pass on him in the esses to take the position back, the pair now having Paterson in their sights. Behind the trio were the duelling Stewart and Spencer with a small gap to Anstis. At the flag Paterson was still 0.579 ahead of McIntyre with another 2/10ths to Hetterscheid, in close attendance Stewart and Spencer were split by 0.463 with another 1½ seconds to Anstis who completed the first six finishers and 5 seconds behind the winner.

It was close again in the Reverse Grid that was reduced to 10 cars with Coe and McIntyre non-starters, Kolin Yannakis was alone on the front row with Matthew Elliott and Graham Moody sharing row 2, down the back were Paterson and Humphrey who had Hetterscheid and McIntyre starting in front of them. Yannakis pulled onto the infield exiting Turn 1 and it was Row 3 starters Anstis and Gerald Watson who led at the end on lap 1 followed by Stewart, next were the fast-starting Hetterscheid, Elliott, Spencer and Humphrey. Paterson's race ended on Lap 2 that saw Hetterscheid advance to 2nd and Watson drop to 4th, next were Spencer, Humphrey, Elliott and Moody. There was no change of lap 3 but next time round Hetterscheid took a lead he would hold until the end followed by Anstis and Stewart then Watson, Spencer and Humphrey, on the penultimate lap Stewart finally got past Anstis and the race ran out with Hetterscheid 7/10ths ahead of Stewart with Anstis 4/10ths back, Watson was 4 seconds down the track at the line with Spencer his shadow six seconds behind the winner, Humphrey completing the top six.

The cars of Coe, Yannakis, Humphrey, Paterson and McIntyre were missing from the grid for the Handicap race leaving a field of 7 starters. That left Moody and Elliott first to be flagged away five seconds ahead of Watson, another five seconds back to Hetterscheid, Stewart, Anstis and Spencer who was alone on the back row. Watson made his usual rocket start down to inside to be behind Moody at the end of the first lap followed by Elliott, Hetterscheid, Stewart, Anstis and Spencer, lap 2 saw Hetterscheid and Anstis both move up one place. At half distance Moody's lead was down to 1.3 seconds, another lap it was 0.26 over Watson, into the final lap for another remarkable finish, decided on the run to the flag when Hetterscheid pulled out all the stops to beat Watson by 6/100ths with 1.8 seconds back to Moody, six seconds down the road were Stewart, Spencer and Anstis covered by 9/10ths with half a second to Elliott. Again, full marks to the handicapper.

For the GT Cup the entry was eight cars, the same as Round 1, two GT-A and six GT-B with their 1.15 breakout time. Qualifying ended with the field covered by 6.7 seconds and the possibly of races within the race, Daniel Gordon was quickest by three seconds, but Chris Parker was only 9/10ths ahead of Markku Braid with 2/10ths to Russell Chapman, 9/10ths to Chris Huszka, another 6/10ths to Peter Beauchamp with Paul Dewar and Jamie Potts split by 2/10ths. During the session Parker had an off at Turn 1 which caused a red flag, his penalty was three grid positions for the first race.

Beauchamp didn't make the grid and was out for the day and Gordon retired after one lap which really opened up the 6 lapper, though Dewar's spin at Higgins first time round dropped him out of the picture. Gordon's demise left Huszka the leader but things were about to change with Potts moving to the front and Parker to 3rd while Chapman went from 3rd to 5th, on lap 3 Parker claimed 2nd place while Potts went backwards to 5th, another lap and he was behind Dewar at the tail of the field. At the front the race had developed into a battle between Huszka and Parker, GT-B v GT-A, Braid was on his own in third followed by Chapman, Dewar and Potts. It was a matter of who would prevail at the finish line, Huszka getting home by 0.329 with Parker 8 seconds ahead of Braid, then Chapman who was nearly 13 seconds behind the winner, Potts eventually got the better of Dewar in the race for 5th and 6th and posted the fastest lap time.

Gordon was back for the Reverse Grid and alone on the front row with Dewar and Potts behind him, but he had a poor start and was in third place at the end of lap 1, Potts ahead of Dewar. Gordon took the lead on lap 2 and it was game over as the gap kept increasing, behind him the order was Potts, Dewar, Braid, Parker, Huszka and Chapman with the closest battle between Braid and Parker. Out front the gap went from 0.49 to 5.6 in the space of one lap, then 5.6, 10.4, 15.2 and 21.08 when the flag fell, it was a dominant performance by Gordon. Potts and Dewar finished 2nd and 3rd but were much closer, split by 3.2 seconds, well back Braid held out Parker by 1.1 seconds, another gap to Huszka and Chapman who was 42 seconds behind Gordon.

The Handicap race was much closer, Chapman had a 5 second start on Braid, another five to Huszka and Dewar, 5 more to Potts and another 25 seconds to Gordon, 40 seconds first to last away, Parker was a non-starter. Braid quickly took the lead from Chapman, the Toyota Trueno driver put his head down and that's where he stayed for the entire six laps, steadily increasing his lead. On lap 2 the order behind Braid was Chapman, Potts, Dewar, Huszka and Gordon who was now 23.5 seconds behind the leader, no change on the next lap but Gordon was closing in, 16.3 the gap, he was 4th at the end of lap 4 and 10.8 seconds behind Braid. With 1 lap to run the lead down to 5.2 seconds from Potts, Chapman and Gordon, the gap 6.8, Dewar was ahead of Huszka. Gordon quickly disposed of the 2nd and 3rd runners but catching Braid was a bridge too far and Gordon had to settle for 2nd place 1.783 behind the winner in the official results. Potts was second across the line but had incurred 20 seconds in penalties which dropped him to P6 and elevated Chapman to 3rd (+8.14) followed by Dewar (+10.76), Huszka (+18.475) and Potts (+21.63), what a difference that penalty made. Again the handicappers were right on the mark, take out Potts indiscretions and the first three cars would have been covered by 1.78 seconds.

It was a relaxed day of racing, closely fought across the board, particularly the handicap races, an encouraging number of rookies making their debut and the meeting ended before 3.30pm. April's Round 3 will be eagerly awaited...

RH

## **RUSSELL'S NOTES**

Winning the GT Cup Handicap was a nice 32nd birthday present for Markku Braid, it was Mum Chrissie's turn the next day, so two celebrations in 24 hours...

*The IB Cup qualifying session was simply sensational as the timing screen kept frantically rolling every lap. Who would be at the top of chart was completely unpredictable until the flag dropped with all twelve cars within 8.04 seconds. Quite remarkable...*

Blair Carswell and Gareith Stanley raced in two categories, Carswell drove his Mazda RX7 in the SS2000/KSport races and SF Cup, Gareith his Honda Odyssey MVP and Honda Integra in the RS Cup and SF Cup events...



*What was the silver pocket rocket that appeared on the RS CUP grid? It had everyone on Level 2 guessing, Darren Walker was the driver, it was superfast, third quickest in qualifying. Later in the afternoon it was revealed to be a Daihatsu Sirion, another first timer...*

The fun went out of the day early for Bryce Hogg when the transmission of his Honda Odyssey MPV stuck in 2nd gear, it left Gareth Stanley on his own to play with the RS Cup cars...

*Did you know that in qualifying the flashing green light on the start/finish gantry indicates two minutes remaining in the session, enough time to get in one more lap...*

The happiest person on Level 2 was timekeeper Jacky Braid, not because it was her brother's birthday but because of a 'present' she had been given. The nice people with the SS2000/KSports group had given her a broadsheet that was a formula for calculating handicapping times, it was easy to learn, Jacky printed out the sheets for handicap guru Malcom Glenn to check, he agreed and it was a thumbs up. Analysing the results of all three races confirmed just how good the system is...

*During one RS Cup race Jonathan Hogg had a problem with an unusual film forming on the windscreen of the # 59 Toyota Levin. He knew it wasn't water and it definitely wasn't oil, the car in front was spraying fuel because the filler cap was missing! None of the flaggies or officials spotted it..*

Two drivers learned to pay closer attention to programme schedule and what's going on around them, each missed the start of a race! One in his 'panic' to join the grid raced through the pit lane exit red light but they took off without him. A black flag, summoned upstairs, wallet lightening and disqualification from the result, a harsh lesson. Traditionally the MCC Series meetings run ahead of time because of the efficiency, the final race on the card finished 58 minutes before it was due to start! Be aware...

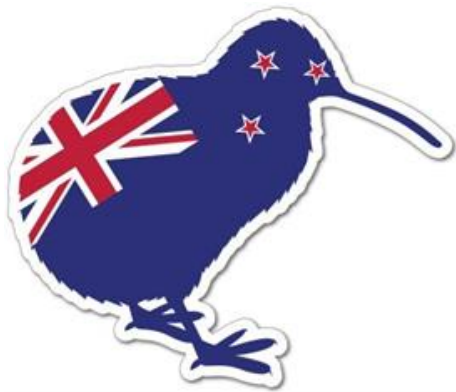
*It wasn't panel damage but mechanical gremlins that ended races early for some drivers. The worst hit was Kolin Yannakis when the familiar cream Volvo didn't get further than the exit to Turn 1 in the first RS Cup race..*

Prior to the meeting there was a high-speed track inspection (?) in what looked like an Audi RS5 Sporthatch. No flashing lights, no signage. The four-ringer looked impressive, it was very quick, was it the Stig giving it stick...

What's better than having a genuine NASCAR tin top in your shed, the answer is two. Paul Dewar debuted his 5-year-old Chevy Lumina in Dewtec livery and wearing # 22, the same as his ex-Team Penske Joey Lagano Dodge Intrepid. Sheds don't get much better than that. Those 358 cube (5.87 litre) NASCAR engines have extremely radical cam profiles that open the intake valves earlier and keep them open longer than stock motor, they pump up to 850 horsepower and certainly have a different sound...

RH





# KIWI'S ABROAD

For Nick Cassidy there was a disappointing ending to last year when he lost his Super Formula Championship crown after being in a strong position to retain Japan's premier open-wheel title with the three December rounds to run. At Suzuka there were back-to-back rounds on the same weekend, in Suzuka I Cassidy crossed the line in 5th place before a major setback the following day in Suzuka II he was forced to retire after 8 laps with an engine failure which meant no points.

The final round at the Fuji Speedway was Cassidy at his brilliant best. In qualifying there were two track infringements which resulted in his fastest laps being deleted and starting from the back row of the grid. The Kiwi gained eight positions of the opening lap and led mid-race during the pit stops, he pitted very late in the hope of a Safety Car, that didn't happen, re-joining in sixth place then gaining two more place to finish 2.26 seconds behind the winner in fourth place. On the championship points table he tied for third with Sho Tsuboi, the Japanese star claiming third on a countback and being the only driver to record two wins in the 8-round series. Cassidy won the race at Sugo, his score card reading 6, 3, 1, 7, 5, DNF, 4 while his Vantelin Team TOM'S took out the Team's Championship. After four seasons it was Nick Cassidy's final Super Formula race, this year he's lining up on the FIA Formula E grid with Envision Virgin Racing...



Brendon Hartley's two Japanese Gazoo Racing Toyota LMP1 team mates didn't contest all the rounds because of conflicting dates, both were generally mid-fielders but were at the top of their game in Suzuki I where Kazuki Nakajima took the flag in 2nd place and Kamui Kobayashi 4th ahead of Cassidy, 24 hours later in Suzuki II they finished P16 and P15 respectively! An interesting point about the Super Formula category is that the Japanese don't like the DRS system, they have 'push-to-pass' that by-passes the fuel-flow restrictor and can be used on offence and defence - the best of both worlds..



It was a big surprise when the announcement came that Liam Lawson would be competing in this year's DTM Championship Series. The Red Bull Junior driver made his 'tin top' debut last year in the final round of the New Zealand Endurance Championship at Highlands Motorsport Park, his GT3-spec R8 Audi didn't win but he did set an unofficial lap record. The 2021 DTM Championship will have new look about it following the exit of both Audi and Mercedes-Benz, with the previous Class 1 regulations gone teams will be running a simplified GT3 based regs, there will be two races at each of the nine round series that starts at Russia's new Igora Drive Circuit on 29/30 May. While Kiwi's focus will be on Lawson, there could be more interest in his new teammate Alexander Albon who lost his Red Bull Formula 1 seat, both youngsters have a lot to prove to the Red Bull hierarchy. There is no conflict of dates between the DTM and FIA Formula 2 Championships, could one or both be a 'double' driver?



In mid-January Liam Lawson got the news that he was waiting for, confirmation that he would also be contesting the FIA Formula 2 Championship with Hitech Grand Prix, the same team he drove for last year in Formula 3 where he finished 5th in the championship. With backing from Rodin Cars the first F2 round he will contest is at Bahrain next month as one of the support races for the season opening Formula 1 Grand Prix. For the first time New Zealand will have two drivers in Formula 2 with Lawson joining Marcus Armstrong who will have his second season in the category. He's moved from the ART Grand Prix team to DAMS whose car he drove in the 2020 post-season tests at Bahrain, becoming the first driver from the Ferrari Driving Academy to join the French outfit. Armstrong received a FDA bonus last month when he was one of three Academy drivers to have a session in a 2018 spec Ferrari Formula 1 car at the company's Fiorano test track. 'Down-Under' will have its strongest ever representation in Formula 2 with Australian Oscar Piastri on the entry list following his win in the 2020 Formula 3 Championship. Go the ANZACs, and two Kiwis has to be better than one...

The final week of January saw Scott McLaughlin's principal sponsor for this year's NTT IndyCar Series revealed. PPG has been a major sponsor of Team Penske for near four decades, their colours will be seen on the #3 Team Penske Dallara-Chevrolet in 10 races, the first at the Barber Motorsport Park on 18 April. Scott McLaughlin has become PPG's 'little boy blue'.





## HANDICAPPER'S PROBLEMS

The following is taken from the 1982 Ohakea Reunion meeting programme:

Handicapper's problems are universal - a handicap race is clearly an attempt to match otherwise unequal cars and the object of the driver is to show the person(s) responsible for all the timing are morons who know nothing about cars and in particular nothing at all about the winning car. The winner invariably is of the opinion that the handicapper insulted him by considering his car so poorly, all the losers agree that the handicapper has accepted a bribe from the winner to give him an unbeatable time. The poor fellow can, in fact never be right. In producing the times, the handicapper has to work from known, partly known and unknown factors. Brake horse power, weight, are examples of the first; speed and acceleration examples of the second and driver ability and weather conditions typical of the last. It is therefore clear that no prerace handicap is ever likely to be anywhere near accurate. It is not meant to be. The object of the race is to give everyone something to argue furiously about afterwards.

RH







Following the initial circuit testing of the new Toyota LMh car at Paul Ricard at the end of October, the Gazoo Racing team took their new challenger to the Algarve International Circuit near Portimao in Portugal for three days in mid-December.

Only four of the six GR drivers took part as Kamui Kobayashi and Kazuki Nakajima were again competing in Japan's Super Formula - Jose Maria Lopez, Mike Conway, Sebastien Buemi and Brendon Hartley. The testing was carried out behind closed doors with no times or photographs released to the media, Day 1 was wet but Days 2 and 3 enjoyed sunny weather with good track temperatures.

Brendon Facebook - *"Testing has already started and we all feel really good about our new challenger. It's as good to drive as it is to look at".*

Toyota Gazoo Racing Europe technical director Pascal Valleson - *'We have made more good progress on our various testing tasks; our understanding of the new car's characteristics increases with every day of running, thanks to plenty of data as well as constructive feedback from the drivers. We are still at an early stage of the track testing programme so there is a lot of work to do before the opening round at Sebring in March, but we can be satisfied with our work so far'.*

Brendon and Sarah remained in Portugal to spend Christmas with friends, half a world away from 12 months earlier at their new home at Taupo, there were other plans for the new-year but they were subject to COVID-19 border closures. Fortunately, the Finland border was good to go so the planned visit to catch-up with Petronas AMG Mercedes driver Valtteri Bottas and his partner Tiffany at their home in Nastola in the Province of Southern Finland was able to go ahead.



Facebook - 'Happy New Year! We couldn't make it back to NZ but feel very lucky to have had such a magical trip to Lapland with good company. We ticked a lot of boxes! Big thanks to the @valtteriibottasexperience for making it happen'.

So where exactly is Lapland? It's the sparsely populated northernmost Region of Finland, bordering Sweden, Norway, Russia and the Baltic Sea, the Arctic Circle cuts through it and it's 900 kilometres from Nastola which makes it an 11-hour drive.

The boxes ticked included skiing, snowmobiling, ice karting, playing ice hockey, riding in a reindeer pulled sleigh, fishing through a hole in the ice and going for a winter dip in a pool that was simply an opening cut in the ice, a chilling experience for those who braved the water.

Remember its winter in that part of the world so Lapland was postcard perfect, transport for the party to the 'playground' was by private jet! There has been no mention of a visit to the region's capital city of Rovaniemi where Santa Claus's village and his main Post Office is located. Did they meet the bespectacled man with a big white beard and wearing a red suit? That's Brendon and Sarah's little secret.

For Sarah there has been a big bonus since the friendship began, Valtteri's partner Tiffany is an Australian and a top road cyclist who has won stages of the gruelling Giro d'Italia Femminile race that's close to 1,000 kilometres long. Another training partner perhaps?

Mid-January was the time that Toyota Gazoo Racing took the covers off its all-new GR010 Hybrid Le Mans Hypercar, the racing version of its upcoming road car that had previously been seen in a camouflage livery. Visually the GR010 bears a very strong family resemblance to its LMP1 predecessor, the TS050, but underneath the skin the car is very different, the result of 18 months development work in both Germany and Japan. Powered by a 3.5 litre twin-turbo V6 engine the Hybrid is bigger, heavier and less powerful and it's predicted that lap times around the Le Mans circuit will be 10 seconds slower.



TGR is entering its ninth FIA WEC season with no changes to the respective race numbers or driver line-up that sees Brendon remain with Sebastien Buemi and Kazuki Nakajima in the # 8 GR010 as sports cars move into the next generation of hybrid racing. Late last month the scheduled opening round at Sebring became another COVID-19 victim, coming into the new six round calendar are two new races, the first at Monza with the WEC racing in Portugal for the first time at Portimao where GRT did their latest testing.

For the first time the FIA WEC starts and finishes in the same calendar year, the first race of the new season is now scheduled for 04 April, the 8 Hours of Portimao, followed by the 6 Hours of Spa (01 May), 24 Hours of Le Mans (12/13 June), 6 Hours of Monza (18 July), 6 Hours of Fuji (26 September) and 6 Hours of Bahrain (20 November). The pre-season Prologue will be at Portimao on 30/31 March.

For the Hartley's it was a New Year to remember, now it's back to business for Brendon, here's hoping that our man can create history with victory in the first race of the new Hypercar era...

RH





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# PARTING SHOT



Manfeild as a venue is nothing if not versatile. In 2013 it hosted the 20<sup>th</sup> Scout Jamboree which attracted over 3000 scouts (boys and girls) and their leaders from NZ, Australia, Indonesia, Korea, Samoa, the Solomons, Cook Island, Tonga and Hong Kong. The logistics were huge, with a volunteer force of some 1200 to look after everyone. The temporary canvas village was on the former horse racing track (prior to construction of the stadium notice). Note the jet sprint aquatrack still in place on the Turn 1 infield.

