

Manawatu Car Club Presidents Report October 2018 – September 2019.

The Manawatu Car Club's 2019 Year was a promising one...

Kiwis were flying high in Motorsport right around the world once again, none more so than the two Scott's, Dixon and McLaughlin, who both won their respective Championships. On the local front MCC Club Member Callum Crawley did us proud when he won the Morrie Smith Memorial Trophy and the Ron Frost Memorial Trophy while on his way to finishing 3rd overall in his rookie year in F1600. Callum also had the pleasure of taking part in the 2019 Formula Ford Festival at Brands Hatch. Kaleb Ngatoa, Jacob Cranston and Justin Allen took on the Toyota 86 series and finished 7th, 9th and 13th respectively, while Chris Symon finished 2nd overall in the Formula First Class.

Overseas, MCC Club Member Fabian Coulthard had a much improved year ultimately finishing 4th overall in the Virgin Australia Supercars Championship with the highlight of the year being Race Victory's at Phillip Island and Perth. Hot off the heels of winning the Super 2 Series in 2018, Chris Pither didn't have a fulltime drive going into 2019, starting the year off in a mentoring role for Garry Rogers Motorsport. However GRM quickly confirmed that Chris would have a fulltime drive in the TCR Series as well as being their Co-Driver to Richie Stanaway in the Pirtek Enduro Cup for the Supercars. When Richie couldn't compete due to injury, Chris stepped into the main game as the lead driver at Winton for 2 rounds where he did an admirable job without a lot of preparation. 2020 is looking good for Chris as he has been confirmed as the lead driver for the Sydney based Motorsport team TEKNO in the Supercars main game. Our favorite son Brendon Hartley left the bright lights of Formula One after just one year into his two year contract, he proved a lot of the keyboard warriors, who were saying that his high profile racing days were over, wrong by securing a simulator drive with Scuderia Ferrari, a development drive for Porsche and multiple drives in the World Endurance Championship, and in August 2019 he was announced as one of the drivers for the GEOX Dragon Racing Formula E team for the 2019/20 season.

In the 2019 year we hosted 26 different race events over 40 days, throw in our monthly Committee Meetings, the well-attended Track & Yack get-togethers, our Prize Giving Dinners, MSNZ and IRC AGM's and that number of days quickly doubles for many members of the team. The social side of the club remains in good spirits with around 60 people attending the very special Summer Series Prize Giving Dinner in April '19 which was held at the Mitre 10 Distribution Centre, and over 80 people attended the Winter Series Prize Giving Dinner in September '19, we also had 40 people attend a special Track & Yack night when we visited the Rush Family Museum in May '19.

On the track the 2018/19 Mitre 10 Mega Summer Race Series was down overall with regards to the total number of entries when compared to the 2017/18 season, the hangover from the quieter 2018 year. Unfortunately there was no round held at Taupo due to ongoing issues between the Taupo Car Club and Taupo Motorsport Park, and there was no discounted round in December '18 due to the increased costs associated with running this series, however competitors certainly got bang for buck with the new format of qualifying and four six lap races per round. The highlight of the 2018/19 Mitre 10 Mega Summer Race Series for me was the "Russell's Relay Race", not because our team won the inaugural event but because it recognizes one of the hardest working members of our club, MCC Patron Russell Harris.

The Feilding Auto Electrical Winter Race Series bounced back with a vengeance from a quiet 2018 year. A total of over 454 entries from the 2019 series (excluding the ever popular Supercarts) eclipsed not only last years 361 entries but it also beat our previous record 2017 year of 449 entries. Out of those over 454 entries there were 227 different vehicles / entrants, these are truly outstanding numbers in a climate where other car clubs around

the country are struggling to get a quarter of those numbers. The Winter Series was once again live streamed to an ever-growing audience and a DVD for each of the rounds was produced.

Transpec and GT Oil returned as sponsors for our Track Day Series which incorporated four Track Days, a Multi Event Day, a Bent Sprint and two Back Track Autocrosses. Over all of these events we had a total of 114 entries with 27 of those being Rookies. While numbers were down on last year for these events it is positive for the club that the number of Rookies attending all of these events is still very high.

The number of Drift Events we held over the 2018/19 year unfortunately decreased from the previous year mainly due to our Back-Track dates being cancelled to accommodate proposed changes to the Back Track for the National Driver Training Center. This was disappointing to say the least as we were just gaining traction with these events. However the four events that were held over the year were epic, the 2018 ShowVember and 2019 Manji March events were huge with many hundreds of cars taking to the track for a charity cruise which raised in excess of \$3,000 for Manchester House. The two Drift Tutoring Events that were held over the year were once again sold out and oversubscribed such is the popularity of such events. Jaron Olivecrona has headed up our Drift Team for the past few years but with a change of occupation, which now sees him residing in Wellington, the reins have been handed over to Jodie Bell. Thank you Jaron for all of the hard work that you have put into this sector of the club, you have set an awesome platform for the coming years. We are looking forward to big things from our Drift Team in the coming year.

The 2018 OctoberFAST and 2019 February Flat Foot events are two-day meetings where we host IRC and HRC sanctioned series as well as other invited classes. The OctoberFAST event had 158 entries which was up by 8 entries on the 2017 event, however the February Flat Foot meeting only had 139 entries, 35 entries down on the previous year due to some rather inclement weather that weekend which meant many competitors did not front. So overall we had 297 entries across the two meetings which ended up being 27 entries down when compared to the previous year.

As for other events, the MG Classic in November '18 and Alfa May Madness the following May kept us connected with the 'gentler side' of our sport. 4 & Rotary Promotions hired race equipment from us and engaged us to run MyLaps timing for Superlap at the March 2019 Jamboree, and in July we also provided operational services to the Porsche Owners Club for the Porsche Driver Training day, run under a MSNZ permit.

Just when you thought it could not get any better, the 2019 year set a new benchmark with regards to our MCC Membership with a total of 460 members, up from our previous best of 429 members in 2018, a truly outstanding number and a testament to the hard work that the team have been putting in. Our Facebook Profile continues to grow along with our Membership with just over 3700 people now following our Manawatu Car Club Facebook page, up by over 700 followers in the past 12 months.

What can I say about our volunteers, our V-Force Team continue to raise the bar year after year, your unwavering dedication to, and support of our sport is truly awe-inspiring, we cannot thank you enough for what you do to allow us to go racing. You are still the best team in the country, this is continually told to us by not only the competitors that come to race here but also by MSNZ Officials, which is the important thing to note here. We showed the rest of the country how to run a race meeting, the 2019 NZGP was the shining light of the Toyota Racing Series once again, with the common comment from MSNZ Officials being that we have the "best team in the country". Volunteers are the lifeblood of our sport, without them there would be no competitive Motorsport of any shape or form, we must continue to look after them and celebrate their achievements as equally as we celebrate any other achievement within Motorsport. In conjunction with our Summer Series Prize Giving we hold our Volunteers Awards night where our volunteers attend the function free of charge and celebrate with all of

the award winners on the night. Notable MCC Volunteer Awards this year went to Darryl Jackson, Danny McKenna, Peter Edmond, Jeff Woodward, Janine Huggins and Matt Strang.

Another huge part of our club is our family of sponsors, who continue to support the club on a level that is truly outstanding. Without your continued financial and personal support it would be considerably more expensive to go racing than it currently is, so I cannot stress to the members of our club enough that we must support these sponsors wherever and whenever we can. Remember that nearly all of our sponsors are also MCC Members, so you will be supporting one of your own.

The Manfeild Park Trust has had its fair share of issues over the past 12 months, for me it was disappointing that all of the good work that Julie Keane and I had started seem to come to a sudden halt when she left her position as CEO. With Kathy Gibson now on board, and with a new team around her, the communication has picked up once again and we have set about getting back on track to making our vision of Manfeild: Circuit Chris Amon being the best Racetrack in the country for not only the racer, but for all of our volunteers, and for the public who come to view our race meetings.

The Manawatu Car Club remains in a solid financial position thanks to the astute management of the club by the current committee. We have invested heavily in our Volunteers this year with new gear (including some very good wet weather gear) and have completed a program of replacing the Safety, Rescue and FIV vehicles all the while growing the profile of the club with some stand out graphics on all of those vehicles. We have also completed the final design of our new Flag Marshall point and have built a prototype (thanks to Ernie's Engineering) and will set about replacing all of the flag points in the coming year. We also completed the fencing along the embankment, which helped tidy up that area of the clubrooms carpark, a massive thanks to Warren Dunn and his team for completing this project and to Andrew Stewart from Mitre 10 Mega for supplying the materials at a very competitive rate. There are a few rather large projects still on the table for the coming year, most notably the re-roofing of the clubrooms which we did not get to this year, and we will be redesigning the kitchen area to make it more user friendly, such has been the feedback from the groups that have hired the clubrooms.

I want to finish by saying a massive thank you..., thank you to all of our volunteers who without their support we could not run a race meeting, our many beloved sponsors who without their support our entry fees would be a lot more expensive than they currently are, our MCC family and the many racers that come to our racetrack, thank you for being a part of another great year. Lastly to the current MCC Committee, notably our MCC Secretary and Racing Events Manager and my right-hand man - Jeff Braid and our MCC Magazine Contributors, Chief Editor Trevor Weir and main contributor and Club Patron Russell Harris, thank you all for your continued dedication and support in making this the best car club in New Zealand.

I look forward to a very positive 2020 year ahead...

Richie Arber
President
Manawatu Car Club Inc