



**Manawatu Car Club Inc**  
**Club Bulletin**  
**January 2025**



# FROM THE PRESIDENTS PEN...

Welcome to 2025 everybody... I trust everyone had a great Xmas and New Years, more importantly I hope everyone is safe and well. If like me you are wondering where the hell 2024 went, I feel 2025 will be no different. It seems that everyone has a lot of things on their collective plates at the moment, and the MCC is no different having come off of one of the busiest years it has had since I have been President. The Motorsport landscape is forever changing, and I look at what has, and is happening, at all levels in the sport and I believe 2025 will be a landmark year for Motorsport in NZ, so be ready for some change.

So why have we been so busy you ask... well the number of events are at an all-time high, as are the number of other clubs and competitors wanting to join those events, it has been and continues to be a real juggling act to fit everyone in and to keep everyone happy. So, what are we doing about it... well as always it comes down to the people on the ground and we have some bloody good people working for us and with us at the moment, Jodie Bell and Jeff Braid are keeping their fingers on the pulses of the clubs and competitors, we are continually trying to get as much information out to everyone as early as is possible, which is sometimes easier said than done, so that people can make plans and choices about which events they want to be a part of, so part of that is our 2025 calendar which you will see in the next few pages ahead, this shows all of the events we have planned for the 2025 calendar year. We do have the calendar being printed at the moment, in a format that you will be able to quickly see all of the events throughout the year and also in the categories that may be of interest to you e.g. the Winter Series dates all grouped together, so you can quickly see those. Once it has been printed, we will put it up on our Facebook page and copies will also be available at any one of our events.

So what do we have coming up in the near future... Well we kick the year off with a GT Oil & Transpec Services Track Day Out on Saturday the 18<sup>th</sup> of January, we ran the first of these new format days towards the end of 2024 and it was popular, then on Sunday the 19<sup>th</sup> of January we have a Grass Autocross, again kindly sponsored by the lovely gents, Greg and Warren, at GT Oil & Transpec Services, this was a hugely popular event last year given that anyone over the age of 12 can have a go and you get to skid around on the grass, so what could be better than that!

Entries to the GT Oil & Transpec Services Track Day Out can be found here:  
<https://manawatucarclub.org.nz/product/transpec-gt-oil-track-day-out/>

Entries to the GT Oil & Transpec Services Grass Autocross can be found here:  
<https://manawatucarclub.org.nz/product/transpec-gt-oil-manfeild-grass-skids/>

The end of January sees the NextGen NZ Championship series come to Manfeild: Circuit Chris Amon, the first round of which is happening this weekend at Taupo International Motorsport Park, then we race into February full steam ahead with our Fugu February Drift Event, another GT Oil & Transpec Services Track Day Out, and later in the month the second round of the Mitre 10 Mega Summer Race Series which will see some specially invited classes join us once again for what will be a great weekend of great racing.

On the Saturday night of the Mitre 10 Mega Summer Race Series, we will be holding the Manawatu Car Clubs 77<sup>th</sup> AGM. This will take place in the Manfeild Park Stadium Suites which are upstairs inside the Manfeild Stadium. While we will reflect on the financial year that has been, which is from the 1<sup>st</sup> of October 2023 to the 30<sup>th</sup> of September 2024, we will be looking towards the future of the club and what that looks like, trust me when I say things never get easier, the rising costs of absolutely everything we need to go motor racing does not help, neither does regulatory pressures such as noise control, so part of the AGM will

be understanding more about those things and what we need to do as a club and as individuals to ensure will can continue to go racing for many years to come.

As always, all MCC Members are openly invited to attend the Annual General Meeting. At this AGM we will elect our MCC Vice President and Committee Members for the coming year – Voting papers are on one of the following pages. Voting and nominations for the Committee are restricted to MCC financial members and Life Members only. To renew your MCC Membership please go to <https://manawatucarclub.org.nz/get-involved/membership/>

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 current MCC 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.



77<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting  
Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2025  
Manfeild Park Stadium Suites  
Brendon Hartley Drive, Feilding  
Doors open 6.30pm  
AGM start 7.00pm  
Nibbles and drinks (non-alcoholic) will be served at the conclusion of the meeting.

**RACE WITH US!**

With regards to the club's current Constitution, which was revised in 2019, in line with the new Incorporated Societies Act 2022, our club's constitution has been rewritten over the past few months by myself and the clubs Vice President Tim Wilde, with input from our solicitor CR Law. A copy of the new Constitution will be sent out to all current financial members of the MCC shortly after the release of this bulletin, I will be asking for feedback on the new Constitution with an eye to having this finalized so that it can be ratified at the AGM on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of February 2025.

I want to end by saying a big thank you to all of our Club Members, our awesome Volunteers, our family of Sponsors, and everyone that has competed with us in 2024, thank you for making it a wonderful year and I look forward to working for you, and alongside you, in 2025.

*Richie*



# VOTING FORM

**2025 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING ELECTIONS**

**Position: Vice President**

**Term: 2 Years. Re-election in 2027**

<b>Nominee:</b>	<b>Membership #</b>	<b>Signed</b>
<b>Nominated by:</b>	<b>Membership #</b>	<b>Signed</b>
<b>Seconded by:</b>	<b>Membership #</b>	<b>Signed</b>



# VOTING FORM

**2025 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING ELECTIONS**

**Position: Committee**

**Term: 1 Year.**

<b>Nominee:</b>	<b>Membership #</b>	<b>Signed</b>
<b>Nominated by:</b>	<b>Membership #</b>	<b>Signed</b>
<b>Seconded by:</b>	<b>Membership #</b>	<b>Signed</b>



# VOTING FORM

**2025 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING ELECTIONS**

**Position: Committee**

**Term: 1 Year.**

<b>Nominee:</b>	<b>Membership #</b>	<b>Signed</b>
<b>Nominated by:</b>	<b>Membership #</b>	<b>Signed</b>
<b>Seconded by:</b>	<b>Membership #</b>	<b>Signed</b>

Please scan and email to [president@manawatucarclub.org.nz](mailto:president@manawatucarclub.org.nz)  
Or post to: Manawatu Car Club, PO Box 542 Palmerston North 4410  
Nominations must be received no later than Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> February 2025

# MEET THE MCC COMMITTEE



President: Richie Arber  
Mobile: 027-2900-668

[president@manawatucarclub.org.nz](mailto:president@manawatucarclub.org.nz)



Vice President / Treasurer: Tim Wilde  
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Events Manager: Jeff Braid  
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[drift@manawatucarclub.org](mailto:drift@manawatucarclub.org)



Jill Hogg



Kaye Flanagan



Donna Whale



Nick Stewart



Jaron Olivecrona



Troy Brown



Greg Browne



Russell Harris  
Club Advisor



Brian Davies  
Club Advisor



Malcolm Glen



**January 2025**

- Sat 18<sup>th</sup> – GT Oil / Transpec Services Track Day Out
- Sun 19<sup>th</sup> – GT Oil / Transpec Services Grass Autocross
- Thurs 23<sup>rd</sup> – Toyota GR Test Day
- Fri 24<sup>th</sup> – Sun 26<sup>th</sup> – NextGen NZ Championship



**February**

- Sat 15<sup>th</sup> – Fugu February
- Sun 16<sup>th</sup> – GT Oil / Transpec Services Track Day Out
- Fri 21<sup>st</sup> – MCC Test Day
- Sat 22<sup>nd</sup> – Sun 23<sup>rd</sup> – Mitre 10 MEGA Summer Series 24/25 Round 2
- Sat 22<sup>nd</sup> – MCC AGM – Manfeild Stadium Upstairs Suites

**March**

- Sat 8<sup>th</sup> – GT Oil / Transpec Services Pararurangi Road Rallysprint (CRSS)

**April**

- Fri 4<sup>th</sup> – MCC Test Day
- Sat 5<sup>th</sup> – Sun 6<sup>th</sup> – Super Trucks & Mitre 10 MEGA Summer Series 24/25 Round 3

**May**

- Sat 10<sup>th</sup> – Back Track Drift Tutoring

**June**

- Sat 7<sup>th</sup> – Winter Series Test Day
- Sun 8<sup>th</sup> – Feilding Auto Electrical Winter Race Series Round 1
- Sun 15<sup>th</sup> – GT Oil / Transpec Services 4.5km Bent Sprint

**July**

- Sat 5<sup>th</sup> – Winter Series Test Day
- Sun 6<sup>th</sup> – Feilding Auto Electrical Winter Race Series Round 2
- Sat 12<sup>th</sup> – Main Track Drifting
- Sun 13<sup>th</sup> – GT Oil / Transpec Services Track Day Out
- Sat 19<sup>th</sup> – Sun 20<sup>th</sup> – 24Minutes of Le Manfeild / Superkart Nationals

## August

Sat 2<sup>nd</sup> – Winter Series Test Day

Sun 3<sup>rd</sup> – Feilding Auto Electrical Winter Race Series Round 3

Sun 10<sup>th</sup> – GT Oil / Transpec Services Back Track Sealed Autocross

Sat 16<sup>th</sup> – Back Track Drift Cone Work

## September

Sat 6<sup>th</sup> – Winter Series Test Day

Sun 7<sup>th</sup> – Feilding Auto Electrical Winter Race Series Round 4

Sun 14<sup>th</sup> – GT Oil / Transpec Services Track Day Out

Sat 20<sup>th</sup> – Feilding Auto Electrical Winter Race Series Prizegiving

## October

Sat 4<sup>th</sup> – Outlaw October Drift Day – Front Track

Fri 24<sup>th</sup> – OctoberFast Test Day

Sat 25<sup>th</sup> – Sun 26<sup>th</sup> – OctoberFast Race Meeting

## November

Sun 2<sup>nd</sup> – GT Oil / Transpec Services Track Day Out

Sat 15<sup>th</sup> – ShowVember

Sun 16<sup>th</sup> – GT Oil / Transpec Services Backtrack Grass Motorkhana

## December

Fri 5<sup>th</sup> – Manfeild Test Day

Sat 6<sup>th</sup> – Sun 7<sup>th</sup> – Mitre 10 MEGA Summer Series 25/26 Round 1



## CLUB CHAT

Less than a month after the conclusion of another successful FAE Winter Series the summer meetings began with the NZIGP 'Ice Breaker' at Hampton Downs on 21/22 September. The programme included the opening round of the GVI.Kiwi Formula Open New Zealand Series where the early Toyota Racing Series FT540 and FT50 models share the grid with the Formula Pacific single-seaters that formed the country's premier category between 1977 and 1993.

Driving FP spec cars, club members Kaleb Ngatoa and Bryan Hartley were included in the 10-car field, qualifying P1 and P8 respectively before both had less than memorable weekends in the racing itself. Race 1 ended on Lap 3 for Hartley when he hit the inside wall exiting the sweeper, for Ngatoa it ended in confusion when the official showed the 'last Lap' board two laps early. Attempting a sub-minute time, he tucked his head down to minimise the drag and thinking he had won returned to the pits two laps early! Hartley made the start for Race 2 on Sunday morning thanks to other drivers providing replacement parts, but it was another DNF when a CV joint broke on the opening lap while Ngatoa crossed the line 1.12 seconds behind Ethan Sillay who scored his first FONZ win. For the Palmerston North engine-builder the weekend went from bad to worse in the 15-lap Feature when his car became airborne in a collision, the hard landing damaging the front suspension, the Safety Car was deployed but the drama wasn't over as race leader Ngatoa pitted with a broken diff - a disappointing start to the series for our members who shared five DNF's and a solitary podium result. There was some consolation for Kaleb when he set a new class lap record at 1.00.997, an average speed of 159.35 km/h, so close to the magic mark.

Round 2 was scheduled in the OctoberFAST programme, but this was unfortunately cancelled...

History was unveiled with Kaleb Ngatoa driving the Swift DB4 that broke the 9-year dominance of Ralt in our International Formula Pacific Series that ran from 1977 until 1993. American Dean Hall won both the NZGP and title in 1989 in the car that was run by Graeme Lawrence's team. Carrying #1 on its distinctive red/blue bodywork with sponsorship from Philips Car Stereo and Canadian Airlines the Hall/Swift/Lawrence combination won the silverware at five rounds, at Manfeild Paul Radasich was the victor in both races with Hall having a 2nd and 3rd. With Caltex-support, two years later Graig Baird won the coveted double in the same chassis fitted with the newly introduced Toyota engine in place of the Ford Cosworth unit...





Two weeks after the 'Ice Breaker' racing returned to Hampton Downs for Round 1 of the Giltrap Group North Island Formula Ford Series with Blake Dowdall waving the MCC flag in the 18-car grid that included the category's older Historic open wheelers.

With Dylan Grant returning to defend his title and Toby McCormack stepping into a more competitive car Dowdall made the perfect start by heading the Qualifying timesheet 0.066 ahead of McCormack, Grant and Reagan Edwards to collect the \$500 cash prize provided by the Hampton Downs NZ Driving Academy. The same trio battled it out in Race 1 where Grant got the hole shot from Row 2 and took the checker ahead of McCormack who snatched 2nd place on the run to the line. There was a wet track for Race 2 where Dowdall's engineer made the right call to run a dry set-up, as the track surface dried the #6 Spectrum 015 was uncatchable, heading Grant and Edwards with McCormack two places back. The final race was also run in wet conditions, Formula Ford rookie Jack Groenewald led the early laps before dropping to P3 at the flag, Dowdall scoring back-to-back wins, this time 11.3 seconds ahead of Grant, with Edwards again heading McCormack in the duel for 4th and 5th. To cap off the near perfect weekend Dowdall won the NAPA Auto Parts Driver of the Day \$300 trade prize.



The NIFF roadshow headed to Taupo Motorsport Park for Round 2 on 16/17 November with Dowdall leading Grant by three points and a 41-point gap to Edwards, three ahead of McCormack. With Grant a non-starter, after qualifying P3 Dowdall won the opening race from McCormack and Leo Scott, Race 2 seeing the 1-2 positions reversed with Scott again following the pair over the line, it was the start of a winning streak for the 2023 Rookie of the Year. In the Feature it was McCormack by 2½ seconds from Scott and Dowdall to secure the overall round win.

The action continued at Manfeild in December, included in the opening round of the 2024/45 Mitre 10 Mega Summer Series. The racing was vintage Formula Ford with Dowdall, McCormack, Edwards and Drake locked in four torrid wheel-to-wheel duels with no respite from lights to flag, at the end of the weekend McCormack had completed a hard-earned clean sweep. After topping the times in qualifying Dowdall had to settle for a quartet of P2's with Edward's scoring three 3rds before a DNF in the feature which promoted Drake to his first podium.

The winning margins in the three races were 0.53, 0.506 and 1.10 with 2.34 seconds the biggest margin covering the top three cars!

Despite failing to win at his home track Dowdall continued to lead the standings by two points from McCormack with a 77-point gap to Edwards who has a six-point advantage over Drake, for Dowdall there was the consolation of winning the Hampton Downs NZ Racing Academy \$500 cash prize for pole. The next round is at the north Waikato track on 25 February - let the excitement continue.

Away from racing, on Wednesday 9th October Manfeild Circuit Chris Amon hosted a very special event for the first time, a RACE4LIFE track day 'Fulfilling Wishes of Palliative Care Patients' in the Manawatu through Arohanui Hospice. The result of a number of businesspeople, race car owners, drivers, sponsors and volunteers recognising a need, the Race4Life Trust was established in 2015 to provide the opportunity for patients and their families to enjoy a day out in a unique environment and making wishes come true.

Earlier in the year Race4Life days took place at the Teretonga and Hampton Downs circuits with Manfeild last on the 2024 calendar, sixty cancer patients enjoying a day to remember with rides including Harley-Davidson motorcycles, classic and racing cars, trucks, giant agricultural machinery and a helicopter. Both the Manawatu Car Club and its members were fully supportive of the day with the majority of track rides being at 10/10ths, 9/10ths didn't seem fast enough for most! Pit lane was like Grand Central Station with the amount of traffic that was so well organised by the army of volunteer helpers. The day was an outstanding success and enjoyed by everyone involved, the 2025 date has been set for Wednesday 26 November, mark it in your diary for a memorable experience that will guarantee smiles...



Once was not enough for Race4Life participant Sharon Alexander who developed a taste for speed.

For vehicle enthusiasts the widely acclaimed Rush Collection tells an extraordinary story because of its diversity and rare exhibits, in some cases the only examples in existence. From a V12 powered Seagrave American fire engine to family cars/wagons to racing cars and everything in between. Not surprisingly the major focus is on open wheelers with close links to the sport in this country featuring the names of Cooper, Brabham, Lola, Begg and McLaren that sit alongside the unique McRae GM9 Can-Am sports car that began life as the GM3 Formula 5000 in which McRae won the 1978 Australian Grand Prix. Run from 1966 to 1974, the Can-Am (Canadian

American) Challenge Cup enjoyed unprecedented interest in North America, the cars were 'beasts' with horsepower rising from 600 to more than 1,200 during the period. The Mahuia Road Can-Am 'grid' recently doubled in size with the arrival of a McLaren with an interesting pedigree, the car being owned by a syndicate that includes Tim Rush. Chassis SN2 was assembled from parts, an M8E chassis fitted with a shortened low-wing M8F body to meet the regulations at the time, known as a McLaren M8E/F the car is powered by an 8.3 litre alloy Chevrolet V8. Featuring a distinctive red/white/#51 livery. the car was driven by American privateer Pete Sherman in two races during the 1972 Series, the following year he achieved top 10 places at Mosport and Road Atlanta in his four starts. In recent times the car has been raced by well-known New Zealand classic car enthusiast Roger Williams, no doubt the M8E/F will be a popular exhibit and another reason to visit, or revisit, the Rush Collection...

If you want to have a look and a listen to this awesome car, please click on this link:

<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=1691243171734601>



The 2024/25 Bridgestone Toyota Gazoo Racing NZ GR86 Championship commenced on 23/24 November at the Taupo International Motorsport Park with our man Justin Allen running a new car for a new team. A veteran of the category, Allen has joined forces with Syndicate Motorsport who will run two cars in the series under the direction of experienced 86 engineer Glenn Mason with continued backing from NAPA Autoparts together with Feilding Auto Electrical, Manawatu Toyota and local dealership TRC Toyota. In a highly competitive field with hopeful 'stars of tomorrow' Justin was P6 in qualifying with race results of 5th, 9th and 7th which placed him P4 in the overall standings, a good strong start with points on the board. The summer series has six rounds with Taupo hosting the first and last, Hampton Downs also has two with Teretonga and Highlands Park one each which means no racing on his home circuit in front of a home crowd, most disappointing...



The club's four-time World Endurance Champion's 2024 campaign ended on the highest possible note with victory in the series ending 8 Hours of Bahrain race on 03 November, his second win of the year. Co-driving the #8 Toyota Gazoo Racing GR010 Hybrid, Brendon Hartley, Sébastien Buemi and Ryo Hirakawa were the defending champions in the most competitive season in WEC history with up to nine different makes on the Hypercar grid. Brendon topped the times in the Hyperpole ahead of the sister #7 for a Toyota front row lockout, in a dramatic race that featured two late Safety Car interventions and a Full Course Yellow Buemi began the final hour in 10th place but only 15 seconds off the lead, he hit the front with 39 minutes remaining to win by 29.177 seconds and clinch the Manufacturers title for Toyota for the sixth successive year. In the Hypercar Driver's Championship the #7 Toyota trio finished 3rd, two points ahead of the #8 combination. Now Brendon, Sarah and Paige look forward to returning to their Taupo home for the Christmas break while the TGR design team work on improving the performance of their Hypercar for the new year testing...

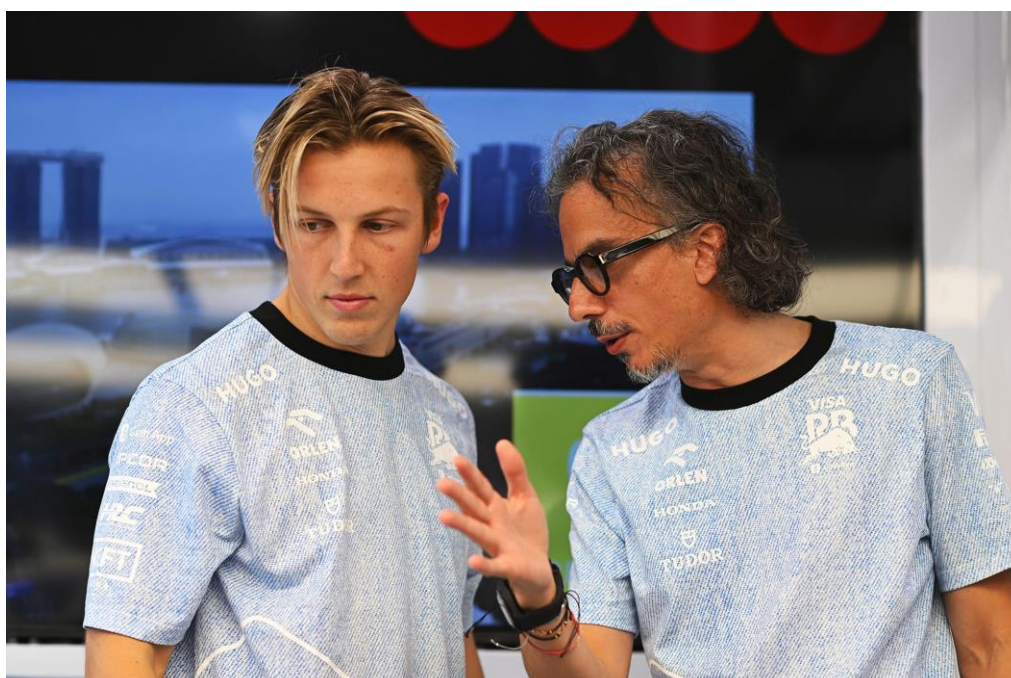


The incomparable Ian Easton reached another life milestone in the build-up to the 38th running of the MG Classic meeting on the second weekend of November when he celebrated his 75th birthday. The new season marks Jack Jack's 58th year of motorsport competition that includes speedway, circuit racing and jetsprinting in New Zealand, Australia, America and England - his is a unique career. To show that winning remains 'the name of his game', the #111 Roush Mustang took the checker flag in the final Touring Car Masters and NZ 6 race of the weekend...



At the same meeting Kevin Ingram made the perfect start to the 2024/25 SAS Autoparts MSC New Zealand F5000 Tasman Cup Revival Series in his Lola T330/332. After heading Michael Hay's McRae GM1 by 0.68 in qualifying the 'Feilding Flyer' won all three races with margins of 1.05, 2.53 and 1.27 seconds to establish an early lead on the points table. In what was the category's only Manfeild appearance in the six-round series, fellow Feildonian Tim Rush scored placing of 5, 5, 7 in the Collection's McLaren M22, he also provided a weekend highlight by giving the recently acquired McLaren M8 E/F Can-Am car its first public outing - great sight, greater soundtrack...

2024 ended on the highest possible note for Dennis Martin with the news that a graduate of his SpeedSport Scholarship programme has achieved his dream of becoming a full-time Formula 1 driver in the coming season. Liam Lawson won the Scholarship back in 2015 and joins the likes of Shane Van Gisbergen (2004), Richie Stanaway (2007) and Nick Cassidy (2008) who have all progressed to achieve at top international level in other categories. For the obviously talented quartet their success stories began with Dennis at Manfeild behind the wheel of a humble Formula Vee/First single seater...



*Liam Lawson (left) with Visa Cash App RB Formula One Team Principal Laurent Mekies*

From across the Tasman comes the news that GRM (Gary Rogers Motorsport) has put their 'fleet' of fifteen S5000 open wheelers up for sale together with a comprehensive spare parts inventory. The S5000 category was created as a 'modernised' Formula 5000 using an Onroak-Ligier chassis powered by a 5.2 litre quad cam Ford Coyote 0V8 engine, the inaugural race taking place in September 2019 before the COVID-19 pandemic interrupted the first season. S5000 was given ADC (Australia Drivers Championship) status but never reached the predicted public interest before ending in 2023 - the cars looked and sounded great, possibly the missing element was name drivers. The car had received a positive fan response after making its debut with demonstration runs at the 2018 Newcastle 500 Supercar event driven by Greg Murphy, John Bowe and Garth Tander which continued after ex-Formula 1 drivers Ruben Barrichello and Giancarlo Fisichella made cameo appearances at the early rounds, from that point the S5000 drivers were a generation of relatively unknown young up and comers. Surprisingly MCC member Kaleb Ngatoa was the only New Zealander to pick-up a drive, the now 23-year-old securing a seat with Team BRM and taking the checker flag on three occasions with wins at Sandown, Sydney Motorsport Park and Hidden Valley...



## REVIEW - 2024 FEILDING AUTO ELECTRICAL WINTER SERIES

For more than a decade the series continues to play a major role on the national motor racing scene, catering for competitors across seven categories with a focus on grass roots and affordability to introduce new people to circuit racing.

Tracgrip Hydraulics and Equipment supported the two open-wheel classes. Formula First might be the oldest in terms of chassis design and engines, the least horsepower and lowest top speed, but after 57 years competing on our circuits, they continue to consistently produce the closest racing. This year there were four standout young drivers - Keiano Weir, Jackson Culver, Yoshi Comeskey and Cooper Prout. In many races the placings were decided by 100ths or 10ths of seconds with Weir and Culver the standouts as the final outcome was decided in

the last round. Weir dominated the day to take the title 75 points ahead of Culver with Prout edging out Comeskey for the last spot on the podium.

Disappointingly, the Formula Ford grid varied in numbers from two to four as Reagan Edwards (2), Dylan Grant and Toby McCormack made appearance and won their races by big margins. Keith Miller contested all four rounds with a solitary win in his 12 podium places which gave him the series by 261 points over Edwards ahead of Halcombe's John Pickford.

The Danny's Auto Services/SAFEngineering RS Cup had fields ranging from 7 cars to a high of 13 in Round 4, missing was three-time back-to-back champion Mike James. Consistency was the name of the game, as a result last year's runner-up Nick Fisher topped the point's table, 22 ahead of Keith Pfeffer with Jo Dunn P3. The feature of the RS Cup is Race 2 (Reverse Grid) in Round 3 where the Trudy Ann Trophy is at stake and presented to the driver of the first car across the line - appropriately Tammie Boyden took the checker with a breakout dropping her to 8th in the official result.

The need for speed appears to benefit the Geartech Automotive SF Cup where numbers ranged from 14 to 17 entries with close qualifying sessions, there was no dominant driver in the 12 races. Scoring regular top six placings decided the final outcome, with two wins to her name Tessa Bevan won the series for the third successive year, on this occasion by 106 points from Hayden Arnold with Robbie Steele completing the overall podium, a nice variation in their cars with Honda Civic, Nissan Pulsar and Mitsubishi Mirage.

With two of the four rounds attracting 20 plus grids the Coresteel Buildings Manawatu IB Cup was super competitive, resulting in top quality racing as defending champion Nick Stewart scored a solitary win. However, the 'GOAT' picked up seven top three placings which saw him finish well ahead of Sam Morley and Dave Burroughs on the points table.



Enjoying the support of the Tremaine Energy Centre and H.E.L. Performance, the MX5 Cup grid had a new look with the names of Markku Braid, Jeremy Hoskins, Jack Cleland and Dean Evans missing while Mick Toll was the

only South Islander to return. After Matt Dilly won the opening race Josh Donohue was unstoppable, winning the next nine! Behind him Dom Fransen and Alex Corpe were regular podium or top six finishers in the point's chase, Braid returned for the final round, scoring a 3rd, 2nd and 4th in a 'spoiler' role'. The final point's tally saw Donohue on 789, Fransen 718 and Corpe 644.

Over the four rounds 29 different drivers faced the starter in the Ernie's Engineering GT Cup with the majority in GT-B, the numbers being boosted by a group of Auckland competitors who committed to the series based on cost effectiveness compared to other circuits. Brothers Steve and Keith Wallace quickly adapted to the Feilding track to provide serious competition for regulars Josh Smith and Jamie Potts. Five GT-A drivers scored maximum points with race wins - Potts (5), Smith (3), Tony Satherley (2), Keith Wallace (1) and Steve Wallace (1), their V8 horsepower proving too much for rising local star Cooper Cooley to overcome in his Honda Civic, too many long straights and not enough infield turns! Despite that, Cooley's consistency coupled with his car's reliability and two podiums in the final round earned him the runner-up spot in the GT-A standings 51 points behind Potts and 68 ahead of Steve Wallace who missed the last round.

The final outcome in GT-B was a 'numbers' game involving races contested and consistently high placings being achieved. Petone's Louise Wall in her Honda Civic was a deserving winner, 39 points ahead of Richard Ransom and Nick Brough - the combination of Potts and the Lexus V8 Toyota Trueno collected the Overall GT Champion trophy.

As a result of competitor input there was a revamped classic category with two classes defined by specific mechanical modifications "designed to promote clean, 'gentlemanly' racing with authentic looking classic cars that the public can easily relate to" manufactured prior to 31st December 1994. With all races run under a new handicap system, grid numbers ranged from 15 to 17 cars involving 23 competitors, analysing lap times and results revealed little difference in terms of performance.

Presentation of the cars has become an integral part of classic racing, the 'tribute' liveries not only bring colour but also tell their own story. Benefitting from outstanding handicapping, the racing was exceptional from the opening round where two of the three winners crossed the line 100ths of a second ahead, that trend continued through all four rounds and at the final meeting the winning margins were 10ths of a second - the overall picture was so close that the Classics Cup was decided on the final race while the Saloon Trophy ended in a tie!

Sponsored by BT Advisory, the Classics Cup included three-time RS Cup champion Mike James who debuted his stunning Nissan-Mobil 500 Brock VN Commodore to end a 13-year build project and promptly won the first race!



Despite a DNS in the first Round 4 race James headed the Brendon Lucas BMW 38i by 14 points for the silverware with Ross Francis third, driving the familiar Ford Falcon GT he's owned for 47 years.



With the backing of Max Tarr Electrical, the Saloon Cup grid had no notable newcomers but vast experience. After 11 races Layton Hammond, Gareth Hogg and Donald McIntyre were in the frame for the class honours, after winning Race 1 McIntyre dropped valuable points to finish 3rd in the standings, it was advantage Hogg after Race 2 before Hammond took the flag three places ahead of the Red Bull BMW in Race 3 to create a tie for 1st place.



The 2024 Feilding Auto Electrical Winter Series was another success story for the club and again reinforced its importance on the national motorsport calendar. Over ninety people attended the enjoyable prize giving dinner at the Feilding Civic Centre where the recipients of the special trophies/awards were also named and the series' sponsors acknowledged: -

- Trudi Ann Trophy (First car across line RS Cup Race 2 Round 3) - Tammie Boyden
- Otago Car Club Cup (Best performance by a female driver in Round 1) - Jo Dunn
- Archer Memorial Cup (Series highest points scoring female driver) - Tessa Bevan
- The Cabbies Trophy (Biggest 'biff' in Series) - Jack Cleland
- FAE Winter Series Spirit Award - Russell Harris
- Champion-of-Champions Trophy - Josh Donohue



## 2024/25 STEWART'S MITRE 10 MEGA SUMMER SERIES - ROUND 1

Run over two days, additions to the normal Supper Series categories were the Formula First and Formula Ford open wheelers with the OK Cup (formerly 2K Cup) added to the mix.

Saturday's schedule included multiple 'test' sessions, qualifying and opening races for the single-seaters and Pre-65 Super Mini Challenge together with two 33-minute races for the OK Cup competitors.



There was a field of sixteen OK Cup cars, Qualifying ending with all 16 covered by 8.8 seconds, the fastest seven by under 3! Dean Jones was quickest, 0.56 ahead of James Whitlock with Dave Verryt, Bruce Simmonds and Alan Lowndes next within 4/10ths of each other. The first 33-minute race saw the cars cover 23 laps with nine on the lead lap. It came down to a three-way battle involving Simmonds, Jones and Whitlock who were half a minute ahead of the pack led by Lowndes, the order was the same at flag fall with gaps of 0.56 and 4.01 seconds. The Reverse Grid Race 2 had six flag falls at 10 second intervals. Again 23 laps were covered with ten drivers on the lead lap and greater gaps. Simmonds got the double with a 1½ second win from Lowndes, a 9 second gap to Jones in P3 and further 6 seconds to Whitlock with Daniel Douglas and Verryt rounding out the top six finishers.

The open-wheel categories were interesting and welcome additions being rounds of significant series, each having four races over the weekend. There was a field of fifteen for Round 3 of the New Zealand Hi-Q Formula First Championship with the qualifying session confirming the ongoing closeness of the competition, 9/10ths covering the top five and 2.4 seconds the first nine drivers. Chris Symon topped the list with Jensen Foster, Liam Nicholson and Keiano Weir forming the first two rows of the grid for Race 1 that had four different leaders over the 8 laps. In the early stages there was Jensen Foster, Hayden Lines and Liam Foster before Symon hit the front on Lap 5 where he would remain, finishing 1.6 ahead of Liam Foster, Nicholson, Lines, Weir and Harry Scott who were covered by 1.76 seconds.

Race 2 became an anti-climax after Nicholson and Weir clashed on the front straight with a lap to run, creating a Full Course Yellow. Up to that point Jensen Foster, Nicholson and Liam Foster had headed the pack at various times while Symon ran 4th/5th before leapfrogging to P2 on the penultimate lap - the official finishing order being Jensen Foster, Symon, Liam Foster, Lines, Scott and Ben Williams.

Nicholson was a non-starter Race 3 while Weir was able to take his place on the grid. Symon got the jump at the start and was only headed once as the field crossed the line, Lines leading by 3/10ths going into Lap 4. The relatively inexperienced Lines pushed the defending champion hard to the flag where they were split by 9/100ths, Liam Foster was 2.24 back in P3 closely followed by Scott, and Jensen Foster, all five within 2.80 of the winner.

Race 4 was a light-to-flag thriller that ended with the top six finishers covered by 0.93 of a second and three lead changes shared between Symon, Lines and Liam Foster. At half distance the leading group of seven cars were within a second, into the final lap Symon was 0.17 ahead but it was Liam Foster who got the critical draft and win by 3/10ths from Symon, Lines, Jensen Foster, Scott and Weir. Formula Vee/First racing as it's always been.

It was a small seven-car grid for Round 3 of the Giltrap Group North Island Formula Ford Series with club member Blake Dowdall heading the points table. Qualifying ended with Dowdall 4/100ths ahead of Toby McCormack and 2/10ths to Reagan Edwards and a further 9/10ths to veteran Shane Drake. Three races were over 12 laps with the 'Feature' a 15 lapper.



Race 1 saw Dowdall hold the early advantage before McCormack took over the lead role as Lap 8 ended, Edwards and Drake completed an extremely tight formation quartet that constantly juggled for position. At the line they were covered by 1½ seconds with McCormack 0.53 ahead of Dowdall, then Edwards and Drake, Jack Groenewald was best of the rest 14 seconds back.

McCormack started from pole in Race 2 but Drake led into Turn 1 after a brilliant start from the second row while Groenewald received a 5 second penalty for a jump start before he spun at the Hairpin! From Lap 2 McCormack controlled the race with few positional changes, his winning margin 0.477 over Dowdall with half a second back to Edwards and 0.26 to Drake, the closeness kept the interest.

It was more of the same in Race 3, wonderfully close racing with the same outcome in the same order. Dowdall led the first 4 laps before McCormack made his move, around mid-distance Drake had a short spell running P2 and held P3 going into the final lap. Over the line the four were covered by 2.2 seconds, McCormack, Dowdall (+0.9), Edwards (+1.1) and Drake with Groenewald again P5 with that consistent 14 second gap.

Other than being an additional three laps Race 4 included the classes weekend drama. Edwards was missing from the grid and there was a FCY before the first lap ended caused by Groenewald parking in the Turn 1 gravel trap, following his recovering the race went 'green' on Lap 4 with a full restart. McCormack again dominated the leading position, only once headed by Dowdall across the line, while Edwards joined from pit lane four laps down. The race ran its course with McCormack scoring a perfect four from four, Dowdall (+1.10) and Drake (+1.14) finally making the podium, Edwards was officially 6th behind Fletcher Sloan and Keith Miller to score valuable series points.

The popular Pre-65 Super Mini Challenge drew a 17-car entry with eight 'bricks' fronting for the traditional David v Goliath battles. Qualifying produced an interesting mix - Chev Nova (Wayne Davies), Mini Open (Kevin

Townsend), EH Holden (Nathan Murray) and Ford Anglia (Brendon Weld) sharing the first two rows while the Jaguar Mk2 (Jack Packer) was P16 and back on Row 8.

The Race 1 Scratch saw Packer power his way to P4 on the first lap to be six seconds behind Davies who led Townsend and Murray, the order remained that way for the entire six laps! At the finish the margins were 3.89, 5.13, 0.31 with a 15.13 gap to Brendon Weld in P5.

Sunday's Race 2 was Handicap with a 47 second spread, Davies being last away and conceding 5 seconds to Packer and Townsend. Mini Sevens Greg Gordon led the initial four laps before overtaken by the Mini Miglia of Kelvin Kewish with the back markers rapidly closing. Kewish held out Gordon by 0.66 before Hobman, Packer, Graeme Lett and Davies crossed the line within three seconds of the winner.

Race 3 was another Handicap with a 48 second spread and Davies again conceding 5 seconds to the group ahead. Evan Thompson was the early leader before Richard Weld, Packer and Richard Llewellyn headed the field with the prospect of a grandstand finish as the fast cars closed in. At the end of the frantic final lap Richard Weld was 1.8 in front of Packer then a blur as Davies, Brendon Weld and Murray took the flag within two seconds.



The RS/SF classes combined to form the Clubman Saloons with a 13-car field, eight being in the SF time bracket (1.25-1.30). Qualifying saw MX5's at the top of the sheet led by Grayson Stowe, Shane Hayter (+0.035) and Alex Corpe (+0.310), the trio ahead of Spencer Morris with the SF cars covered by 2.8 seconds. Aston Walker was quickest of the RS runners, 4.1 ahead of Keith Pfeffer and Rodney Penn.

Race 1 saw pole sitter Stowe a non-starter and featuring a rolling start, it also saw the MX-5 contingent outfought by Morris, Chris Huszka and Graeme Wall, the latter pair started from Row 3 of the grid. Morris and Huszka had a great duel before finishing 0.75 apart with a 4.59 gap to Wall and another 1/10th to Corpe. Penn claimed maximum RS Cup points 2.3 ahead of Nick Kacouris with Walker a surprising 12 seconds away in P3 after his strong showing in qualifying.

The Reverse Split Grid was another full-on duel between Morris and Hayter with Morris again prevailing, this time by 0.73, Corpe was 3.3 behind with Huszka and Stowe next home. Kolin Yannakis became the RS Cup mover, from P4 in Race 1 to winning Race 2 by 14 seconds over Walker and Penn. The Split Grid Handicap had the SF cars covered by 15 seconds and the following RS by 10 seconds. Morris's hot form continued with his third victory, 1.49 over Richard Howe, Hayter, Corpe and Stowe, the five cars within 2.2 seconds. Yannakis again headed the RS group by another big margin to Penn and Walker.

The Open Saloon category combined the IB and GT Cup classes that produced a strong grid of 20 cars with 5½ seconds covering the top three drivers and 3 seconds the next group of seven - Josh Smith topping the time sheet from Tony Satherley and Richard Clulee, the trio followed by IB front runners Steve Elliott, Dallas Green and Irdan Harkan.



Race 1 was Scratch with a rolling start, Smith drawing fist blood with a 1.29 second victory over Satherley, a 4 second gap to Clulee who was followed by Peter Beauchamp. Heading the IB group were Green, Elliott and David Graham.

The Reverse Split Grid Race 2 ended with bigger gaps between the leading cars, Smith again the victor but by a 3.26 second margin, surprisingly the gap to Clulee and Beauchamp was more than half a minute. Elliott got the better of Green by four seconds in the IB Cup group, Dennis Young securing P3 ahead of Donald McIntyre. The Race 3 Handicap was flagged after four laps following a mid-distance incident that resulted in a Full Course Yellow, handing Smith three-from-three over Satherley, Clulee and Rowan Trotter. McIntyre took the big IB points ahead of Nix van Rooijen and Steen McGhie.

The final two races of the meeting had an interesting additional element thanks to the innovative thinking of MCC President Richie Arber - 8 lap Xmas Derby's with a specific window (Laps 3 to 6) for a compulsory pit lane drive-through and the grid set on a 'first up, best dressed' basis.

With a seven-car Clubman field the question was can the Morris Toyota Corolla be beaten and MX5 pride restored?

Morris, Hayter and Corpe led initially before Morris, Stowe and Walker completed their drive-throughs on Lap 3, two circuits later Hayter and Corpe were in with Hayter rejoining ahead of Morris by 2.6 seconds, it was 'game on' again! The gap was the same going into the final lap before closing to 8/10ths when the pair crossed the line, Corpe finishing third 8.7 further back, well clear of Stowe, Darrell Harris and Walker.

The Open Saloon race attracted nine starters with the format again creating great interest as to who would be first to make their move. Satherley judged his pit lane pass perfectly to emerge with a clear track and was never challenged, taking the flag 9.2 seconds ahead of Smith with Beauchamp and Russell Chapman well back in 3rd and 4th. Green was next home to take the IB Cup honours, both McGhie and van Rooijen a lap down.

Do these races have a future? The concept has great potential from an 'entertainment' perspective with the additional strategic twist. For the drivers there's also the bonus of an additional 6 kilometres of racing. Well worth thinking about.

The 'Man of the Meeting' had to be GT Cup racer Rowan Trotter. During Saturday's 'test' session the engine of his ex-Samantha Stanley Honda Integra had a major 'implosion' (internals contained within the motor) exiting Turn 7 with spectacular oil-fed flames coming from the exhaust! There was no time wasting, a replacement motor was sourced, a team was assembled to carry out the 'transplant', checked and ready to race in the small hours of Sunday morning. After qualifying P9 Rowan's score card read 9, 7, 4, 7 which was good reward for all involved - Team Trotter also showed that the spirit of club level racing is alive and well...

