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March 2023

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Welcome to the HRC March Newsletter

Our next event is the ever popular **Legends Of Speed** weekend at Hampton Downs on 18th and 19th March

To Enter www.motorsportentry.com

For spectator tickets <https://www.iticket.co.nz/go-to/hrc-events>

Great selection of Classic and Historic classes including Formula 5000 and Formula Open

Races have been scheduled for the following classes or types;

F5000, Mini/Pre 65, BMW E30/E46, BMW 2 Litre, ERC Series/Trofeo Combined, Pirelli Porsche Championship, Touring Car Masters NZ, Formula Open NZ, HVRA/Pre 78, Heritage Touring Cars, Historic Sports Sedans and HMSC.

The organizers reserve the right to combine race groups if insufficient entries for any group are received.

CLASSIC TAUPO MEETING - CANCELLED

The HRC meeting at Taupo on the 25th 26th March has been cancelled due to matters outside of our control. The IPC has been transferred to ACC meeting on the 2nd April at Hampton Downs

GREAT LAKE TAUPO MEETING – 15th / 16th April



Our next meeting at Taupo (Great Lake Taupo) on the 15th and 16th April is all go and entries will open 13th March at www.motorsportentry.com.

The HRC Events Great Lake Taupo Race Meeting is one of the highlights of the season. A full weekend of racing with some of New Zealand's biggest categories competing.

Formula Open, BMW 1 Hour Enduro, Mini/Pre65, Touring Car Masters NZ, HVRA, Pirelli Porsche Championship, Historic Muscle Cars and Historic Saloon Cars, FJ/F3/HFF along with 2KCUP and IPC joining in on Sunday.

SEASON FINALE MEETING – Hampton Downs – 27th / 28th May



The final meeting of the Season is the Season Finale at Hampton Downs on the 27th and 28th May

Saturday features some of the most exciting categories currently racing in NZ - NZ Sportscars, Superkarts and Superlaps. IPC and RYCO V8 Utes will be there too – The V8 Utes running a 1 hour Enduro to round the day out.

Sunday we turn our attention to the Vintage Car Club Roycroft Trophy Races. Named after the Roycroft family, we wish a speedy recovery to Terry Roycroft after his recent stroke.

Also competing will be FJ/F3 and Historic Formula Ford, PPG Classic Trial along with Superkarts and Superlaps.

A varied weekend racing that will provide entertainment for everyone.

Motorsportentry.com Entry System

The HRC motorsport entry system has been hacked on numerous occasions over the last few weeks and is causing problems for Chris and Tim and all our competitors. The website is now working but if you experience problems email chris@hrcevents.co.nz with your name, car, pit details and credit card details (number , Name, expiry date , 3 figure security code) and we will do the entry for you.

For next season Entry Prices will rise and not because of track rates rising but other suppliers increasing prices. HRC can keep entry fees reasonable if we can combine some of the smaller classes. This has been very successful with Mini and Pre 65 with both classes showing growth

A personal plea from Chris

During the Paul Fahey meeting at Pukekohe, I watched two races from the grandstand and the racing was completely spoiled by the number of red flags. I also spent time in race control and agreed with the red flags that were displayed. The main reason was drivers stopping in dangerous place on the track.

Can drivers make a special effort to pull off the track at the Legends of Speed meeting so the Clerk of Course can use yellow flags and keep the race going. Not much fun to do an 8 lap race, 4 or 5 laps which are behind a safety car.

Jim Palmer Meeting Celebration Dinner

Below are some pictures of the celebratory dinner held on Saturday night of the Jim Palmer meeting. Phil Noble took plenty of pictures of the legends at the meeting and they can be found on Phil's Facebook page

NZ Classic Car Racing



Jim Palmer at his dinner. Thanks to Brian Lawrence and Mike Clark for doing a great job interviewing the Legends



Leo Leonard and Paul Fahey still talking about so called legal “adjustments” and the final result of a number of Benson and Hedges meetings. Robbie Francevic after hearing about all these adjustments stated he had never cheated were upon the room erupted in laughter

		Season 2022/23			
Meeting Name	Format	Venue	Date Friday	Date Saturday	Date Sunday
Waikato Challenge	All classes	Pukekohe		12-Nov-22	13-Nov-22
2K Cup Challenge	All Classes	Hampton Downs		26-Nov-22	27-Nov-22
Tasman Revival Taupo	All Classes	TIMP Taupo		7-Jan-23	8-Jan-23
Historic Grand Prix	Historic	TIMP Taupo		21-Jan-23	22-Jan-23
Tasman Revival Jim Palmer 2	Classic / Historic	Pukekohe		25-Feb-23	26-Feb-23
Legends of Speed	Classic / Historic	Hampton Downs	17-Mar-23	18-Mar-23	19-Mar-23
Classic Taupo	Classic / Historic	TIMP Taupo		25-Mar-23	26-Mar-23
Great Lake Taupo	All Classes	TIMP Taupo		15-Apr-23	16-Apr-23
Season Finale	All Classes	Hampton Downs		27-May-23	28-May-23



Please check out the video from SKOPE 2023. It is a bit longer than our usual videos as it features races 3 & 4 from Sunday.

<https://www.facebook.com/theFASTfiles/videos/1360639191391077/>

John Tomlin

FONZ wows good sized crowd at Pukekohe Final



Photo courtesy of Cameras in Action

Promains Formula Open New Zealand had the fourth round of the series at Pukekohe Park Raceway on the 25th & 26th for the Jim Palmer Tasman Revival Meeting. This meeting was very special because it is the last time Wings & Slicks cars will ever race at the iconic South Auckland track. There was a decent sized crowd there to enjoy the racing with FONZ, F5000, Historic Formula Ford and Formula Juniors all celebrating the different eras of single seaters that have raced at Pukekohe since 1963. There were also good fields of saloon cars in several different classes.

Saturday qualifying got under way in damp conditions and fifteen cars headed out onto track all touring around looking for a dry line. It was sad to see Kenny Smith pull into the pits after only a couple of laps with electrical gremlins in the ex-Marcus Armstrong Tatuus FT50. However, once a dry line appeared they all got down to business with first Liam Sceats posting the quickest time only to have Sam MacNeill pip him by a few tenths and then within the dying seconds James Watson put in a flyer in the Swift DB4 to put it on pole only to have MacNeill steal the pole back off him as the chequered came out.

So, race one on Saturday afternoon saw the front row consist of MacNeill on pole with Watson alongside, Liam Sceats in third place and series rookie Kaden Probst in fourth position. Tom Alexander was next in sixth finding the set of tyres he was

trailing from a Formula Four car not up- to the task of keeping the FT50 in the game. Watson got the jump on MacNeill at the start who soon was under pressure from Sceats, Probst and Alexander. Watson opened up a gap as the FT50's behind him battled for second down to sixth. A Safety car on the third lap to recover Zac Christensen's FT40 that had been struck by electrical gremlins brought the pack back together. Of course, this played into the hands of Leo Francis in the other FT40 who was now leading the Jim Palmer Cup. On the restart Watson led away with a hard charging Liam Sceats chasing him hard. With a couple of laps left to run Watson hit a wet patch going into the hairpin and went wide onto the grass letting Liam and Tom Alexander through. So at the line it was Liam Sceats 1st, Tom Alexander 2nd, and James Watson 3rd.

Race two saw the Swift DB4 of James Watson lead away from the line with Liam Sceats and Tom Alexander with Sam Mac Neill fending off Kaden Probst and Gary Rush in another of the Swift DB4's. Another safety car before the first lap was completed while Zac Christensen's FT40 succumbed again to electrical issues once again handing the lead of the Jim Palmer Cup to Leo Francis. On the next restart Watson again got away using the extra horsepower of the Toyota 4AGE and one lap later the Safety car was out again. This time Gary Rush had a spin in the middle of the back straight when his steering wheel came off in his hands. He hit the brakes which in turn threw the car into a spin, luckily everybody missed him. Needless to say there were only two racing laps in which James Watson brought the black & yellow swift home in first place from Liam Skeats and Tom Alexander.

The final race was the feature race for the Graeme Lawrence Cup and the Jim Palmer Cup supported by Black Fox Electrical and The Fitness Portal respectively and was supposed to be over ten laps but due to the amount of safety cars throughout the day, time was running short so the race was shortened to eight laps. Thankfully the whole race ran without incident. This time Zac Christensen managed to keep the FT40 running and managed to hold out Leo Francis from getting a clean sweep of the round for the Jim Palmer Cup.

Next meeting out we are looking forward to Hayden Bakkerus joining the series in an FT40 and the return of Paul Couper with his new engine so there should be more up for grabs in this class.

Once again James Watson got the jump on Liam Sceats at the front but as the race wore on James's Avon slicks that are nearly a season old started to give up and Liam started to close in making several dives on James at the hairpin finally making one stick to take the lead and then Tom Alexander who was now back on a set of Hankooks also claimed second spot from James at the hairpin and that is how the first three crossed the line for the final ever FONZ race at Pukekohe.

Whilst there appears to have only been three guys featuring at the front this does not tell the true story of the racing. The fact is the fastest laps of the first six cars were only six tenths of a second apart with the remainder of the field all within 2 seconds of each other as well. That is close racing.

Speaking of the rest of the field, there was action aplenty right throughout the day with Kaden Probst and Sam Mac Neill squaring off all day and Gary Rush really getting the Swift DB4 going better and better after suffering ignition issues for the last several rounds Gary has had little seat time and was getting quicker as the day wore on. Grant Rivers in the immaculate ex POPE Racing Swift DB4 has got faster with each meeting and was thrilled to get into the 59's. Grant is a well renowned Drag Racing competitor but has fallen in love with ground effect Formula Atlantics and will only get faster. The father and son duo of Richard and Fergus Crabb had a great day with Richard back in the car for the first time since early last season and Fergus getting quicker with each meeting and it won't be too long before he is right up with the front mixing it with the experienced guys. Fergus's background is Off Road racing and drifting so with only a season in the FT50 under his belt he is starting to look like a threat to the established circuit racers.

Of the other three Geoff Harriman had a steady weekend in the Promains sponsored FT50 whilst series newcomer Fraser Windelburn in his Ford BDA powered Swift DB4 is becoming more and more comfortable in the car in only his second ever race meeting.

Last but by no means least the legend that is Kenny Smith only got two laps in with the Tatuus FT50 before it succumbed to gear change issues once again. Kenny ever the philosophical one proclaimed that at least this will motivate him to get the 1990 NZIGP winning Swift DB4 ready for the start of next season.

That wrapped up the final ever wings and slicks racing ever to run at Pukekohe as it closes on the 4th April this year. It was fitting that the meeting was named after Jim Palmer as he was the first man ever to drive the track on a press release day in January 1963 in a Brabham BT16. It was also fitting that Kenny Smith at least started a race at this last ever wings and slicks event as he raced a Cooper sports car at that first meeting.

The end of the day was very emotional for not just the FONZ competitors but all of the other classes as well because at the end of the meeting there were a lot of people hanging around and they were all saying they did not want to leave as we all knew this was the last time we would ever see this famous exhilarating and historic race track again.

“Goodbye Pukekohe and thanks for the memories”



Leading the 13-strong SAS Autoparts MSC NZ F5000 category field into the first turn for the final time at Pukekohe Park Raceway on Sunday afternoon was category young gun, Michael Collins, from Christchurch, behind the wheel of the iconic Alistair Hey & Vicki Jones-owned STP pink-liveried Leda GM1 001 #22

Photo credit is Photo: Fast Company/Geoff Ridder

51 YEARS ON, McRAE'S ORIGINAL GM1 FINALLY GETS THE PUKEKOHE RACE WINS/LAP RECORD NOD IT SO RICHLY DESERVED - YET NEVER GOT- FIRST TIME AROUND

The Pukekohe motor racing circuit in general, and – in particular - the New Zealand Grand Prix meetings held at the storied South Auckland venue between 1970 & 1975 didn't do late Kiwi racing great Graham McRae any favours...even when the legendary Wellington-born racing car designer/builder/driver was at the peak of his powers, in 1972.

So, you can imagine the ripple of excitement that ran through the packed SAS Autoparts MSC NZ F5000 Tasman Cup Revival Series pits after the third and final race

of the weekend at the Historic Racing Club's final Tasman Revival race meeting at the soon-to-be-shuttered South Auckland motor racing facility last Sunday (Feb.26)

In what for all intents and purposes is the very same car (the Leda-built GM1 001) McRae debuted at the 1972 New Zealand Grand Prix meeting at Pukekohe 51 years ago, category young gun Michael Collins not only won the third and final SAS Autoparts MSC NZ F5000 Tasman Cup Revival Series race of the weekend, it also looks like, that by being the only driver (at the meeting!) to dip into the 54 sec/lap bracket, a new F5000 ultimate Pukekohe circuit lap record re-jig is now very much in the offing.

"Seriously, "said NZ F5000 Association committee member and official spokesperson Glenn Richards on Monday, " I take my hat off to Michael. He's a class act all right (and) definitely a credit to the category.

"It's now, obviously, our job to try and verify if in fact the 54.980 lap time Michael did on the last lap of the last race at Pukekohe over the weekend was in fact a new lap record. If it is, it's going to be his in perpetuity which is kind of cool. But if it isn't and we find that someone else has gone faster, then fair play to them."

The first of late, great, Kiwi racing car designer/driver Graham McRae's three GM1 cars to run in the distinctive fluoro-pink colours of sponsor STP, Leda GM1 001 was arguably the single most successful F5000 car of the 1971-1973 period. With McRae behind the wheel, it won the 1972 Tasman Series and the 1972 US L & M Continental Series before being sold and used here in the 1973 Gold Star and 1973 & 74 Tasman series by Wellington driver Dexter Dunlop.

Such was the state of development of new racing cars at the time, that cars like GM1 001 quickly became obsolete and it would have remained a footnote in history had the current owner, Alistair Hey from Queenstown, not doggedly decided that it needed a second chance.

As it turned out, each of the three SAS Autoparts MSC NZ F5000 Tasman Cup Revival Series races had a unique look and feel all their own despite the first and final ones being won by Michael Collins.

The first race, on Saturday afternoon was won in convincing style by Collins after he spent the first two laps chasing down pole sitter Kevin Ingram (Lola T332). Codie Banks (Lola T332), who qualified a season-best second, was due to start alongside Ingram but could not take the position up because his car refused to run over 5,000rpm on the warm-up lap.

A trip to the pits eventually uncovered the problem and Banks Jnr was able to return to the race with three laps left to run. Codie's father David (Talon MR1) meanwhile took over third place and held it to the flag ahead of a fast finishing Brett Willis (Lola

T332). Michael Collins' sister Anna (Leda LT27) also finally got the better of a race-long duel with the Lola T400 of Auckland veteran Shayne Windelburn to finish fifth.

It was Glenn Richards (Lola T400), however, who won a frankly 'wild'n wacky 'rolling handicap start' second SAS Autoparts MSC NZ F5000 Series' race of the weekend on Sunday.

"I could definitely argue," said Richards afterwards, " that that race at Pukekohe was the fastest ever F5000 race at the track. I know this because I was in the lead running mid 55s and there were three guys behind me all running in the 55 sec bracket on the final lap (chasing me) as well.

"The track was fast in the coolness of mid-morning. It wasn't too hot like it got in the afternoon which took a second off everyone's lap times, except, obviously, Michael's. There was plenty of grip. I could launch the car into Castrol and really lean on the back tyre under acceleration but by the afternoon had to be a bit cautious. And it was very much the same coming over the hill."

Which just leaves the third and final race of the weekend. This was the again won by Michael Collins, from Kevin Ingram and David Banks.

Written like that it sounds like another straightforward result however it was anything but. Though Collins grabbed an early lead from pole position and entered the hairpin breaking area well in front David Banks who up until that point had been enjoying a real purple patch of form decided to brake a little later than normal. The result was that at one stage it looked like he was going to T bone Collins just as the later turned into the corner. However, to his eternal credit Collins saw what was happening in his mirrors and delayed turning in to the corner until Banks swept past in a cloud of tyre smoke.

The only problem was that this allowed Kevin Ingram to take advantage and the lead on the race, a lead which he would hold until halfway through the third to last lap. Banks meanwhile ended up near the rear of the field and made it back from 9th place to 6th then in a final burst, back up to 3rd.

Unfortunately, Brett Willis (Lola T332) had a re-occurrence of the same engine problem which stopped him in the second race, the car 'simply stopping' and not being able to be restarted again.

In Class A (for older cars) Frank Karl (McLaren M10B) finally got the better of category competitor Tony Roberts (McLaren M10A high wing') though that would only come with a rare DNF from the Roberts' camp.



Photo Credit - Marlene Ditchfield
Independent Writer & Photographer

Heritage Touring Cars (Classic Touring Car Series)



One more round this season

· Legends of Speed Hampton Downs 18/19 March 2023

Enter on line www.motorsportentry.com

Contacts Chris Watson – chris@hrcevents.co.nz

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Meetings this season:

- ACC Meeting Hampton Downs 2nd April (Re-scheduled event from Taupo Classic)
- Great Lakes Taupo Meeting 16th April
- Season Finale 27th May

Three 20 minute races and one practice. Three race groups based on lap times

Rules on www.hrcevents.co.nz

Alan Greig

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A 'Fitting farewell' is how best describes TCM & HRC's last hurrah at the Pukekohe Park Racetrack last month.

Teeming with rain on Friday put paid to a lot of our racers practice endeavours. None was more luckless than Johnny Hepburn in the beautifully turned out Monaro, all the way from the South Island to join us, detonating his engine during practice. What could've been for this Timaru racer ? Racing bikes, Super trucks and utes on this circuit, the Monaro was to complete the quartet but not to be.

The renowned Puke rain continued in patches through Saturday but not dampening anyones spirits. Qualifying sorted out the pecking order in the Anderson camp, or so Andrew thought, taking out a sub minute time slightly better than his son, Nathan. It was schoolboy Nathan, grandson of Bruce & Jude, that appeared in Poppas car for his inaugural race meeting. He is one cool, calm & collected young chap, who will go far with his racing.....

So with that sorted, our first Scratch race after lunch, and 23 V8's rolled out of pitlane, 3 of these were NZV8's from a bygone era, giving the ole girls a run off the back of us, which turned out to be a 'good fit' and gave these guys somewhere to race.

The rolling start was a 'dogs breakfast' as they trundled around like 'browns cows' in what should've been a mighty thunder as they rocked in unison across the start/finish line...lesson learnt!

It was now Nathans turn to shine in this race, taking his first win/first race, and a sub minute to boot, ahead of the Shelby mustang of Craig Buchanan, while Andrew DNF'd. Third home was Andrew Stevenson in Dad Pete's mustang...a trio of Fords on the podium!

Grassroots class saw the nimble little 6 cylinder pink Torana of Paul Burnet secure #1 place with likeable newbie Jayd Queenin in the Commodore home in 2nd, the Holden trifecta broken by Tony Vujnovich's Capri.

Race 2, our 'trophy' race, where the fastest half of each class is slotted behind the slowest car based on qualifying times, gives everyone a 'shot' at winning but nothing could beat "Pinky" as he drove the wheels off the little Torana to take out this race in Grassroots and Nathan taking out the Xtreme. Rick van Swet and Craig Buchanan struggled to keep up with the front runners. Jason Raiti took the driving off Dad for the last 2 races and put in pretty impressive times. By now Phil Macey had a good grip on the XE Falcon after swapping from the XA earlier and bringing his times down with it, not too far off the lap times of the Cuttance XE.

Our last race of the weekend and Andrew bought the XE home 0.1 seconds ahead of his son with Andrew Stevenson, Craig Buchanan, Rick van Swet (Camaro), and the Commodores of Rhys Hunter and Ross Golding following on.

His first meeting and first win in TCM for Jayd Queenin (Commodore) in Grassroots, had him bubbling over with enthusiasm, posting a 1.04.6, as Dennis Lovegrove (Pontiac) failed to catch him this time round coming in 2nd followed by Jason, Paul & the two DJR tribute falcons.

Was great to see a handful of new and not so new drivers and cars on track with us for this last round, including Ross Golding (Commodore) Gary/Jason Raiti (Falcon) Bayden Matherson (Commodore) & Jayd Queenin (Commodore) Another newbie to our class was John McKechnie in the immaculate and original 69 Monaro.....welcome one and all!

The NZV8s of Ian Pledger, Simon Fleming & Waka Nathan Harris joined us off the back of our grid at this meeting to give their pride & joys a run. They set some pretty good times with Pledge setting the quickest time in Qualy but not to be outdone by Simon who took out all 3 race wins and Waka not far in arrears.

Our Saturday barbeque & prizegiving ritual was held a little earlier to enable attendees to support the Jim Palmer Dinner. Thanks to Pete Stevenson for supplying the Scotch Fillet and Sausages. We presented a tribute Pukekohe cake for our last round at this circuit with Bruce Anderson doing the cake cutting honours.

Big Thanks to our drivers, supporters and sponsors - Outback 4x4, Atlas Direct Off Road Caravans & Lucas Oil & Phil Noble, our Media Guru



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