



**Patron: Howden Ganley**

## **Newsletter January - February – March 2024**

### **Officers**

**President:** Nick Simpson  
**Secretary/Treasurer:** Paul Coghill

**Vice-President:** Wayne Perkins  
**Past President:** Barry Dorking

### **Committee**

Barry Leitch & Mark McGuinness

### **Vehicle Acceptance Committee**

Barry Leitch Kevin Telford Wayne Perkins Brian James

### **Newsletter Editor**

Trev Lister

**Website:** [www.classicmotorracingclub.nz](http://www.classicmotorracingclub.nz)

**Contact:** [info@classicmotorracingclub.nz](mailto:info@classicmotorracingclub.nz)

### **Up and COMING CMRC EVENTS:**

Date.	Event	Venue
15 <sup>th</sup> June	Autumn Fling	Levels Raceway
30 <sup>th</sup> /31 <sup>st</sup> August	Brooklands	Levels Raceway

## **Presidents Report – Nick Simpson**

As we head into the quieter time of the year, I imagine many of you will be doing the repairs and upgrades needed for the next season. I hope this goes well!

It is a good time to look back on the successes our club has enjoyed.

1. Our flagship event, the Classic Motor Racing Club Southern Classic was a brilliant event. There were some great fields and great racing across the weekend. The Formula Juniors were a highlight for many, and it is just terrific that these cars have not only survived but that they are raced the way their designers intended.

Once again, I wish to thank the committees for the many hours of work that are needed to put a race meeting together.

2. One of the goals in our 2022-2025 Strategic Plan was to survey our members to get feedback. I wish to record my thanks to those who took the time to respond. The return rate was high and that reflects the enthusiasm that members have for their club. My thanks to Paul for sending these out and analysing the results. We are always looking to improve, and your feedback will be used to make changes where needed.

3. The executive committee is currently reviewing our progress towards the goals laid out in our strategic Plan. Once this process is completed the results will be available to our members for their comments and input. This process of setting goals and reviewing progress is a recent addition to the way we do things. It is going well.

4. Our membership continues to increase – great news!

5. Our new club constitution is being worked on at present. Barry Dorking has taken the lead here and we are close to having a document for the membership to consider. This will be done prior to the AGM.

We have had a few changes on committee. We have farewelled Craig, Steve and Leon.

Leon's legacy is the fine document that our Vehicle Acceptance Committee will use when assessing cars. I think the points system works really well. The form is available on our website for those who would like to run their own car through the process.

Craig was the driving force behind the Drivers Scholarship. We have not yet found a suitable nominee but at a recent committee meeting the idea of a driving school for our members was floated. Barry Leitch tells us this was done in the past. It was a chance for experienced drivers to pass on some tips to newer members of the club. Would you be interested in this if it was on offer?

Please contact Paul or myself so that we can gauge interest.

The Motorsport New Zealand Conference is in Christchurch this year. It is a good opportunity to make new contacts and to renew past friendships. Paul and I will be attending. We will keep you posted on the key items that were discussed.

Our next race event is the Autumn Fling. It is scheduled for June 15. I look forward to seeing you there.

Nga Mihi  
Nick Simpson  
President

### **Race Report – Paul Coghill**

Well, another successful Southern Classic is behind us. Thank you to our Race Committee and volunteers for all of their effort again this year. Thank you also to our Sponsors that have again supported our event along with the new sponsors that came onboard this year. The Levels circuit was its usual picturesque setting and was very much appreciated by our entrants and particular our overseas entrants.

It was great to see the Formula Juniors again with their many overseas entrants and a strong contingent from NZ. We also invited for the first time the 2K Cup S.I. These are our future classics and they were well presented and provided exciting racing as well as the youngest driver at age 13!

Our featured car was the PDL 1 Mustang. Thank you, Steve Ross and crew, for bringing the car and putting on such a great display in racing it.

Please see further reports on the event below.

The Autumn Fling is on June 15<sup>th</sup> and entries will be sent out later this month. The move in date was to accommodate the South Canterbury Car Club and the timing of next year's rally. They tell me that the weather is also perfect in June albeit a little 'crisp' first thing so they're sure we will have a great day's racing.

### **Southern Classic 2024 (Trevor Lister)**

**Wow:** Thanks to the Committee, the sponsors and the drivers. This was the most laid-back race meeting I have attended for a quite a while. Punctuated by many opportunities to chat with old friends from my Central Districts days. Thanks for coming South guys! Come again and don't worry about the wee bit of rain on the first day. It was only a brief interruption. Not of my doing – Honest! West Coast rain comes straight down. It is that Wellington stuff that comes in sideways! The next morning, I asked a cheerful group why they were so chipper.

"The weather is fine they said, the track's dry and everyone is happy". And you can't argue with facts like that. The happiness was contagious.

**Put a V8 in it:** So, camera in hand I walked the fence-line, wondering why so many Mustangs were in the car park. I was quickly disabused. This year is the fiftieth anniversary of the Mustang. (1964 – 2024), do the Math: As good a reason as any for a Newsletter article on these iconic cars.

The '50's had put American Auto markets into a bit of a tizz. New Marques popped up and disappeared just as quickly as they came, and the European manufacturers began to bite into the American market, bringing their sibling sports cars with them. The initial response was head in the sand stuff. The following excerpts may be found in Robert Lacey's book "Ford".

*"- It was expected that as America became more prosperous, she would express her prosperity in terms of a bigger and better car"*

*- "Nobody with a decent job and education could possibly choose a European Car for its own sake"*

*- "Beetle-buyers were people who could not afford a real car".*

The head in the sand approach was deceptive. In 1958 foreign imports totalled nearly half a million cars. When the Falcon came to market, as a response to that in 1960, it was the best seller in the Ford line-up for that year.

Demographics were also changing. Woman sought cars they could reasonably handle and drive, and were asking for a say in their purchase. And their kids were nascent baby boomers. Time for a change. When it came it came with a rush. The European imports would be challenged in the home market by "compact" cars. (A term first used by Nash to identify this new market segment), and defined as being a car with a wheelbase of 110 inches or less. A definition with little meaning outside of the USA, as compact or not, 110 inches of wheelbase still looks big anywhere else.)

Ford's response was a car for the people, a compact family car. Falcon was its name, and it was touted as being the first compact car supplied by a Big 3 manufacturer. That title only holds because the Nash Company is not included in the count of big 3 companies! But we need not get too grumpy. From '60 onwards the Falcon was being sold into this newly defined market. In essence it was a downsized Galaxy with generic running gear purloined from the Ford spare parts bins.

Like the Mustang that would emerge four years later it was a spectacular success - Ford's biggest seller for 1960. Then the stylists got involved and the simple little family car became other things all-together different. Including a "European style" convertible, to which was soon added a "sprint" package (put a V8 in it) and finally a sporting car for the youth market. All on the same chassis and all dipping into the same stock of running gear. In simple terms the '63 Sprint Falcon was mechanically identical to the '64 Mustang. Chassis, suspension, interior and drive train.

So the Mustang does not stand alone. It was a take on the '63 Falcon Sprint Convertible, given a distinctive top hamper, and set loose!! The 10 years of the first-generation



production run ran to just under 3 million cars. No wonder everyone at Ford was smiling. With their competitors playing catch-up.

Even internally at Ford the Mustang was pushing aside its own nest mates as well the top 3 opposition. As

good a car as the Falcon Sprint was it was still affected by the success of its own offspring. Why buy a Sprint when the next real thing was available just around the corner at more or less the same price.

So where did all those shunned Falcons go? Most likely into CKD packs outward bound for assembly in Australia, or New Zealand, or Argentina. Or any other place with a Ford Assembly line.

But that never stopped us antipodeans from following Ford's example and putting V8s into cars that never had them to begin with. Here are a couple from the mid '60s, in the middle of the all-comer saloon days. Both were Auckland based but that didn't stop them coming South. The shot shows the Morri and the Zephyr Corvette cresting the hill at Pukekohe in the mid 60's.



Your editor remembers Jimmy Clark taking the Zephyr for a lunchtime lap or two at Wigram in '65. The surprise was that while the Tasman Formula Lotus 25 could crank on up to 140 mph or so on Wigram's big back straight, the Zephyr was not far behind at (if my memory treats me well) circa 135 mph. (As an aside Jimmy seems to have had a liking for Kiwi specials. Also taking in a similar lunchtime ride in the Lycoming Special at Teretonga, in, I think, the same year).



And here we are 50 years on, still putting in a V8 and having fun. Demonstrated this year by Bruce Goodwin in his Mk 3 Zephyr and Cam Neill in the big yellow '30's Chev Coupe.

Bruce has often come South, but this was Cam's first trip to Levels. But they were close together all meeting. Thanks to both of you.

Which brings us nicely to **the sibling relationship between Formula Junior and Formula Ford**, but not before putting in another thank you. This one to

those FJ teams that took the option of shipping their cars through a war zone to get them down under, while getting themselves to the Southern Festival of speed.

Formula Junior was a late 50's Italian invention. Beginning in 1957 as a national formula aimed at preparing younger drivers for greater things. This was to be racing on a shoe string with bunch of rules to keep it that way. Limits were placed on engine capacity, the extent of allowable engine enhancements, (no overhead cams, no mucking about with crankshafts), brakes and carburation to be same type as the donor vehicle, gearboxes from any road touring car, along with restrictions on weight, wheelbase and track.

It didn't take long for the message to spread, and within a year or so the class was declared to be an FIA International Formula. No longer just an Italian national class, but an international one. With races for the class throughout Europe, and wider if you looked

close enough. By the time the formula had done its dash it had turned out 16 drivers that made their way to Formula one, three of whom became World Champion.

The thing that did in Formula Junior was money, or rather a lack of it. As Formula Junior became popular it also became more expensive. (For an explanation of how this happened search the web for the article "*The Trend of Formula Junior, MotorSport Magazine April 1963*"). Then head back to the net and call up all the race entries for 1963, the last year of Formula Junior in England. You will find only one factory entrant – Denny Hulme. The rest were privateers paying their own way, or Race Driver School Students. Quite a few of them too.

These Schools knew early on that change was coming, and that they had a lot to lose from it. In early '63 they were already exploring the possibilities of getting FJ type cars with the relatively new Ford Cortina "Kent" engine. Which after all, in 1100 cc form, had been the go to FJ engine. But costs being costs eventually settling on the 1600 cc Cortina GT version of the Kent. Relatively easy to tweak with the possibility of providing close to FJ power levels.

Lotus provided a run of chassis specifically for Formula Ford. The first standalone race for the new formula came in July '67. A twenty-car field turned up. 10 Loti and 10 newcomers.

It was the Drive Schools that had pushed the boat out for Formula Ford. If they couldn't have their FJs then maybe they could have the next best thing. Kit out any remaining FJs with one of those nicely affordable Cortina GT engines. Or wander down the street to one of those now outmoded FJ constructors, or become one yourself. Just keep the School going and wait for better times. The trials settled on the 1600 Cortina GT engine, and an initial run of chassis were provided by Lotus. These were given the type number Lotus 51, easily recognized as being upgrades on the earlier Lotus 22/31 frames. 218 of them before the run ended. By which time there were plenty of new comers ready to pick up the flag and keep production going. Not just in England but worldwide.

**An Interesting bit of Maths:** If you double your horsepower will that halve your lap time? The following adage was worked out by some-one, some-where a fair while back. but my memory on that has not yet popped up the who and when. The quote goes "All things being equal lap speed is proportional to the 6<sup>th</sup> root of horsepower."

Having both Formula Junior and Formula Fords on the same track at the same time allows us to see whether or not this quote holds true. We have two sets of cars that were close to equal back in the mid 60's. Along with our set of real time race data to work with. Plus we can wrinkle the horsepower from the historic records. Say 130 HP or so for a late build Formula Junior (the pursuit of which broke the FJ bank) and 105 or so for a well fettled Formula Ford just a few years later.

Using our mid grid cars in each case the 6<sup>th</sup> root data predicts a gap of about 8% in the lap times, in favour of the FJs, while our lap time data tells us that the mid field FJs were lapping around 10% quicker than the mid field Formula Fords. Close enough eh! Maybe there is something in it?

(Editor's Note - The 6th root of engine power reference can be found in the MOSS AND POMEROY's 1963 book "Design and Behaviour of the Racing Car". Expressed as "If all other things are equal lap speeds are inversely proportionate to the 6th root of engine power")

## CMRC Southern Classic - TROPHIES AND AWARDS

### CLUB TROPHIES:

PDL – Best New Zealand Special	Graeme Hamilton ACE III
Ross Clifford – Sportsmanship	Trevor Lines Mini Cooper
Peter Gendal – Most Polished Performance	Duncan Wright Johnston FF
Lindsay Neilson – Best Performance	Jamie Greene Datsun 1200
Spinners Award	Paul Coghill Jaguar Special
Scott Auto - Best Presented Saloon	Rod Sinclair Alfa Romeo Guila
Ransley Riley Half Shaft – Hard Luck	Paul Coory Ford Mustang

### CMRC CLASS TROPHIES:

Auto Restorations – Formula Junior	Vernon Williamson Mallock U2
Leitch Motorsport – HVRA	Colin Campbell Holden Torana SLR 5000
AF Southgate and Sons 2K Cup SI	Jorjah Hill Toyota Celica
VCC Banks Peninsular Vintage and Historics	Jack Nelleman Mallock U2
Million Dollar Cruises Pre '78 Classic Saloons	John Munro Jaguar XJ6 4.2
Paul Smith Earthmoving Historic FF SI	Andy Downs Lola T342'
Kelford Engineering Services Classic Saloons	Campbell Neil Chev Coupe
Springbank Farm Formula Libre	Kim Shearn FF Crosley.
CMRC Grand Prix – Formula Junior	Noel Woodford Gemini
CMRC Grand Prix HVRA and Pre 78	Leon Hallett Ford Falcon

### SPECIAL TROPHIES:

David Brown Memorial	Maurie Bone Ford Anglia
Les McGraw Sportsmanship	Barry Leitch Ralt RT4
Ron Brooking	Bruce Henderson Mazda RX3Bruce

Clubrooms Spot Prize

Oakly West. (First Event aged 13)

### Pre 78 – Wayne Perkins

The **2023/24** season kicked off for the **Pre 78 Classic Saloons** on Saturday 2nd September 2023 with the **Brooklands** meeting at Levels Raceway which is the first of our three **Classic Motor Racing Club** 'home' meetings. We had **26 entrants** with good weather and it was a great start to our season with **Trev Lines** and **Andy Miln** making debuts in their respective 1971 Mini Cooper S and 1977 Mercedes Benz 450 SLC race cars plus the welcome return of **Ian Perry** in his stunning 1968 Sunbeam Stiletto after its major accident a year earlier.

All of us were delighted to be both back into the race seat but especially to catch up with each other to the extent that a certain drip in a blue 1969 Viva GT forgot to fit his **Transponder** for qualifying so he had to start off the back for Race 1 and effectively shagged his day from the get go.

[insert photo]

Seven weeks later we rolled into Christchurch for the **Wigram Revival** at Ruapuna on Friday 28th October. Testing was held on the Friday with qualifying and racing on the Saturday and Sunday. We had **19 entrants** with **Tim Stanton** subbing for Jeremy Stace in the 1964 Jaguar E-Type (invited guest), **Cameron Lawes** (and son **Findlay**) in his 1970 MGB GT joined us for the first time and we welcomed **Randall Diggs** in his gorgeous

1972 Datsun 1200 SSS. As always, we had a great weekend racing with an excellent discussion at the Saturday afternoon debriefing about the direction that we are going as a class.





At the start of December we were at the very bottom of the South Island enjoying the famous **Teretonga** circuit where you really need to put your big boy pants on to do well. We only had **12 entrants** which is three below the minimum that we can turn up with and still be considered a standalone class at race meetings, however Norma the Track Manager kindly allowed us to participate because of our exemplary previous entry levels. **Monty Machaffie** made the trip down from Christchurch with his 1974 Ford Capri GXL 3.0 V6 and **David Hunter** successfully debuted his yellow 1970 Ford Cortina GT 2.0. The racing was the usual exhilarating high speed game of bravery that Teretonga requires.

At the Saturday social debrief after the racing is when **Steve Pauling** (1974 Ford Escort RS 2000) won the **2023 Pre 78 Driver of the Year** award which was richly deserved by a chap who lives in Nelson but has travelled south with his good lady wife **Barb** for every single Pre 78 meeting since our inception.



On a **personal** level though I was bugged, I had been working as the main Skipper on our Million Dollar Cruise sightseeing activity in Queenstown for months because of sheer lack of Staff availability even at \$50-00 per hour, and then on one of my days off I also managed to simultaneously crush and severely burn one of my feet which pretty well extinguished my ability to look after the Pre-78 group. As a result I asked fellow Historic Commission member Leon Hallett if he would be prepared to look after the group in my place. I and the rest of the Pre-78 group are grateful to Leon for agreeing to take that on in addition to his similar role for HVRA. Leon resigned the Pre-78 role shortly before the Super weekend at Ruapuna and as a result, on the Saturday afternoon at the post-race debriefing, the Pre-78's asked me if I would once again take on the role of Coordinator. I agreed to that with the proviso that I didn't want to deal with any of our rare panel damage

incidents. So three of our guys; Steve Pauling, Ewan Macpherson, and Blair Bishop promptly agreed to act as an incident committee to look after that part of pre 78 classic saloon racing. We will also create an eligibility panel to assist with future driver and vehicle selection at events. Long story short; I'm back as the Coordinator or Captain or Chief or general dogsbody.

Next meeting for the **Pre-78's** was 8 weeks later on Friday 9th February back at Levels for the Classic Motor Racing Club's **Southern Classic** meeting with testing and qualifying. We had a good field of **20 entrants** with most of the regulars in attendance apart from the notable exception of my 1969 Vauxhall Viva GT which I had managed to rather severely damage the previous weekend. The Sunday racing was the usual exuberant fun with close racing and was capped off at the end of the day when we had a flying farewell race with 6 of the HVRA guys joining us where we got pretty well smoked.



The following weekend, the **Pre-78's** rolled up onto the grid at Teretonga for the Ascot Park Hotel **Speedfest** and were informed that they were to be amalgamated with the **HVRA** competitors which included a **Group A** car on **slicks**. The one sacrosanct rule with the Pre 78's is that you must be on **treaded tyres** so there was a certain amount of consternation about that with several of the competitors querying the Coordinator about its inclusion but to no avail. However being a very stoic lot, and after the driver volunteered not to lap anyone, the 78's just got on with enjoying the weekend and watching the debut of the long awaited 1967 Chevrolet Camaro RS by myself.

After wrecking the Viva two weeks previously the entire Motorsport community had moved heaven and earth to get the Camaro to Teretonga from Auckland in record time as well as getting its brand-new cage inspected and approved. **Motorsport NZ** created a **Log book** in record time then created a digital version and sent accompanying emails to

smooth the process at its initial scrutineering at Teretonga much to the delight of the Pre 78 competitors, supporters, spectators and general fans as it got an enormous round of applause for making it to the meeting. Unfortunately, because of its really low gearing it didn't get a chance to shine but we still had good fun with it nonetheless.

However the most enthusiastic Pre 78 competitor was definitely **Mark McGuinness** who blew up the engine in his Ford Falcon in qualifying, he then drove back to Queenstown and returned the following morning with his 1972 Alfa Romeo GTV and then amazingly managed to win the highly coveted **Brian Crosbie Memorial Trophy** for Pre-78 saloons in the final race of the day.



The following morning Steve Pauling dropped me a note to ask was I aware that the **Pre 78's** had a grid at the Canterbury Car Club's **Super Weekend** in late March, I was absolutely stunned as in theory we had a big gap in our Calendar and with only a months notice it was going to be hard to get a decent field numbers wise. Anyway, we had a ring around and ended up with **20 entrants** as our guys stepped up to the plate with an amazing 23 apologies from the other 78's for not being able to make it because of hip replacements, weddings, Melbourne GP, overseas holidays and other perfectly valid reasons. **Chris Buckley** joined us with his newly acquired 1964 Morris Cooper S as did **Bruce Henderson** in his 1970 Ford Escort Mexico both of which were immaculate beautifully presented cars.

It was an amazing weekend and probably one of our best ever as we had a superb pit area, beautiful weather and an excellent well-run meeting with clever handicapping to round off our summer/autumn race season. The only one who was a whisker flat was **Blair Bishop** whose engine in his 1969 Fiat Abarth Coupe had finally cried enough after 71 separate race meetings, yes - **71!!!** - I was utterly gobsmacked by that fact - like how good are those Fiat engines?

So far this season we have had two minor panel damage incidents as we collectively have done over **3,000 laps** of some of the closest and most exciting racing seen in this country for many many years. We have had **51** different competitors at our **6 different events** so far and we have had superb fun but best of all we have thoroughly enjoyed each other's company and wholeheartedly welcomed new competitors to the class.

Personally, I'm very proud of what we've managed to achieve as a group and where we are going but most of all I would like to thank the competitors for their amazing and ongoing support for the pre 78 Classic Saloons. Don't forget we still have one last one day meeting on Saturday June 15th at Levels called the **Autumn Fling**, see you there.

### **Vehicle Acceptance Committee**

As discuss in the last newsletter the Vehicle Acceptance committee is working through our classes to see if they can be made more relevant to today's racing and encourage more cars out of garages and back on the track.

The VAC indicated they were looking at amalgamating the Sport's & GT's into other classes (Pre78, Small Saloons, Large Saloons or Libre) this is still a work in progress.

We have had to do this at our club meetings and form an 'Allcomers' race so as to get the numbers up for the grid. It would be nice to formalise it with group names that were appropriate and cars that looked the part with some good close racing.

These are cars that we would like to provide an opportunity in our club but it appears that they will remain in sheds for some time. We are keen to see them out and provide some racing for them.

## FACEBOOK PAGE:

Our club face book address is [www.facebook.com/cmrcnz?fref=ts](http://www.facebook.com/cmrcnz?fref=ts)

The normal posting rules apply. The post will be promoted as long as it is positive and about club type stuff. Don't forget to "like" the page and ask your friends to like it as well.



[WEBSITE www.classicmotorracingclub.co.nz](http://www.classicmotorracingclub.co.nz)

Remember this is your website and you can add photos to it to make it more interesting.  
**The latest entry form is always on the Website as is the membership form.**