BURGERFUEL PORT ROAD DRAGS

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47 NOT OUT

THE CAPITAL ONCE AGAIN PUT ON ITS FINEST FOR THE ANNUAL BURGERFUEL PORT ROAD DRAGS

Since 1966, Cam County Inc. in Lower Hutt has held street drags on Port Road in Seaview. In itself, it is not a bad effort to run an event successfully for 47 years. However, even more impressive is that for each and every one of those 47 years the event has taken place uninterrupted! Yep, you read that correctly — not a single cancellation or rainout due to Wellington's often fickle and inclement weather. We guess even the man upstairs enjoys the day, and, to be honest, who could blame him, as the guys and gals who organize things certainly know how to put on a great event. Before we get into the nitty-gritty of what took place on Sunday, November 24 at the BurgerFuel-sponsored event, we pay tribute to a great man who departed the scene earlier in the year to embark on another journey — up above, on God's drag strip in the sky — Colin 'Shady' Lane.

Colin was a founding member of Cam County and an instrumental and influential hot rodder to all; he was well respected and loved by everyone who had the privilege to meet him. When he was not hurling himself down the strip, he would toil away behind the scenes, putting in countless hours organizing stuff and ensuring everything ran smoothly on the day. (Just quietly, he could also pull a mean pint back at the Rishworth Street club rooms.) Therefore, it was only fitting that, prior to the first strips

of rubber being laid down this year, a minute's silence was observed to remember and reflect on a sorely missed and extremely well-respected friend.

With the demise of all but two street drag events in the North Island (this one and Taupo Quay in Wanganui), it's best to get your entry form in quickly to ensure you don't miss out on one of the 62 spots on offer. Leading up to race day, these spots were quickly filled by a wide and varied bunch of very cool and very tough street cars. Understandably, the majority of entrants were Wellington locals, but a number of out-of-towners entered, too, with a fair few tough Wanganui cars making the trek south to upset the locals. Dan Southall even trailered his very quick nitrous-devouring Camaro all the way up from Christchurch to race — now that's commitment.

Eclectic and varied would be a good way to describe the pits as you walked along and admired the cars. Camaros, Mustangs, and multitudes of Holdens of various models and configurations were present, along with Michael Jacomb's Bentley (yes, a Bentley) and the late-model AMG Mercedes Benz of Mark Coffey. Causing quite a stir in the pits was Aaron Thomas' '1FAT46' Ford Pop. Aaron decided to fit a turbo as big as your head to the 408 that sits between the chassis rails of his beautiful car. Being the clever and extremely talented fabricator he is, the pipework on this thing is second to none and truly is a work of art. >

Things didn't all go to plan for Aaron on the day, though. This was the first time he had had the Pop on the strip in this guise, and after a hell burnout, he waited anxiously for the Christmas tree to count down. On the last amber, he released the trans brake and the blue Pop took flight and pointed its nose vertically towards the cloudless sky in a massive wheel stand. Aaron got off the gas quickly, and the Pop slammed down hard back to earth.

Back in the pits, a survey showed that the damage to the nose and front guards was only cosmetic. The decision to wind down the boost on run number two to ensure that all four wheels remained on the ground meant the resulting second wheel stand was somewhat less spectacular than the first. Sadly, though, the universal at the diff-end of the driveshaft had had enough and decided to part company with the rest of the car. Thankfully, the yoke stayed put and no oil fell out. Suffice it to say that this car will be mental when/if it finally manages to get down the track under full power.

Also pleasing to see for the large crowd of spectators who lined the track was a good selection of competition cars wanting to shake out some off-season cobwebs and get a bit of a handle on some new combinations. Ryan Sheldon brought his beautiful blue '66 Impala down from Auckland to take on Port Road for the first time. Ryan has recently burned some serious midnight oil changing from carburation to EFI and stack injection. Unfortunately, he didn't have a suitable tune-up for pump gas and only managed to cough and fart his way down the track on each run.

Another tough-looking car that caused a stir in the pits was the pro-street '65 Chevelle of Guy and Cam Ombler. After it had sat in the shed for 16 years, Guy and Cam decided the time was right for it to come out and make some noise and some smoke and have a bit of fun in the process. The 402-cube big block sounded strong; once Cam gets comfortable behind the wheel pedalling the monster, this will be one street car to look out for.

Each car had three qualifying runs. After the three rounds had been completed, the cars were divided up into five brackets, with the theory being that the field is divided up equally into 10-second cars, then nine-second cars, >

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right down to the quickest of the quick, the six-second cars. The rules dictate that you cannot run quicker than 6.50 seconds; do this once and you get a warning, do it again and you are on the trailer — no questions, no arguments; safety is paramount.

The quickest of the quick was Aaron Jackson's 'COPB8' Torana, which was featured in the last issue of *NZV8*. Aaron ripped up the track with a very respectable 6.63-second pass. Second fastest in qualifying was defending champ Darren Riches in his Ford Pop 'TUBBED'. He cut a time of 6.84, while long-distance traveller Dan Southall's 'NOS406' Camaro carded a 6.88 in third. These three were the ones to watch, and they made up three of the final four spots in the quick 'A bracket'.

Darren knocked out Aaron in the semis and met Dan in the final. After the smoke had cleared, the win light was in Darren's lane and once again the Pop took the spoils. The rest of the brackets produced some hard-fought, exciting, and very close racing. The dedicated spectators who stayed to the very end were treated to some fantastic racing. Back at the club rooms, it was time for the exhausted, and burnt, racers and organizers to sit back and reflect on what had been a great day's racing. After the spoils were handed out to the deserving winners, it was fitting for Shady's daughter Pauline to award the Colin Lane Memorial Trophy for the very first time. This was awarded to Dave Fishwick, who may not have had the quickest time of the day, nor the most impressive car entered, but, being an all-round 'good bastard' who races hard and always thrashes his six-cylinder Valiant wherever he races, you couldn't have asked for a more deserving recipient.

Make sure you mark this event in your calendar for next year. I'm sure Shady upstairs has already organized fine weather for the day — all going well, in three years' time, we will be celebrating 50 years without a rainout! V8

SPONSOR	CLASS	WINNER	VEHICLE
BurgerFuel / Cam County	**Fastest on the day**	**Darren Riches**	Ford Pop
BurgerFuel / Cam County	**Runner-up**	**Dan Southall**	'67 Camaro
General Metal Recyclers	**1st, Class 1**	**Darren Riches**	Ford Pop
Road & Track	**2nd, Class 1**	**Dan Southall**	'67 Camaro
Value Motors	**1st, Class 2**	**Shayne Winton**	HSV
The Pulse NZ	**2nd, Class 2**	**Steve Walsh**	One-ton ute
Tommy's Real Estate	**Best Burnout**	**Pete Clark**	Van
Wakefield & Scott	**1st, Class 3**	**Dave Fishwick**	Valiant
Waiwhetu Auto Services	**2nd, Class 3**	**Matt Gibbons**	Cuda
Pit Stop Petone	**Best Female**	**Justina Hart-Scott**	Camaro
BurgerFuel Wellington	**1st, Class 4**	**Steve Paterson**	Corolla
Hutt City Council	**2nd, Class 4**	**Steve Jones**	Cortina
Cam County	**1st, Class 5**	**Nat Curly**	Commodore
Cam County	**2nd, Class 5**	**Nakita Hart**	Commodore
Michael Symes Memorial	**Ford vs Chev**	**Darren Riches**	Ford Pop
Cam County / Pauline Lane	**Shady Lane Memorial**	**Dave Fishwick**	Valiant
Pit Stop Lower Hutt	**Best Ford**	**John Dreliozis**	'64 Galaxie
All Fleet Services	**Best Chev**	**Ryan Sheldon**	'66 Impala
Custom Works Automotive	**Best Holden**	**John Hooper**	WB ute
Rhys Old Plumbing	**Best Mopar**	**Steve Taumira**	CM Valiant
Greenstone Concrete & Asphalt	**Hard Luck**	**Aaron Thomas**	Ford Pop
BurgerFuel Johnsonville	**Best Comp**	**Cameron Ombler**	'65 Chevelle
Cam County / NZHRA	**NZHRA Best Chev**	**Nelson Leota**	'60 Impala