

NZV8 Touring Cars - Round 1

Photos: Jason Harrison

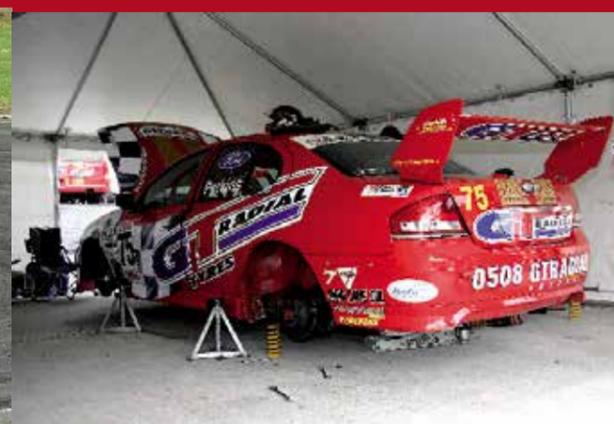
A great deal of work was done over the winter off-season, reducing the advantage the Falcons had over the Commodores in the 2006 Parker Enzed New Zealand V8 Touring Car Championship. Commodore driver Kayne Scott may have become the belated 2006 champion, but it was a championship won by consistency, not outright speed. The NZV8 Touring Car class uses a parity formula, meaning the Falcons and Commodores, although running different engines, are near identical to each other in every other respect to create close, exciting, and unpredictable racing. Hopes were high that changes made during the off-season had supplied that parity going into the 2007 season. The Falcons had their compression ratios lowered, and dyno testing proved the Ford and Holden units were now about equal on horsepower. However, once the cars hit the track for

Friday practice at the opening round in Pukekohe, it quickly became obvious the Falcons still enjoyed an advantage. Although both brands were producing similar horsepower, and both had similar top speeds, the Falcons had a small torque advantage, which allowed them to reach top speed a little quicker than the Holdens. In a class where half the field can be separated by one second in qualifying, the slightest advantage can have devastating results. The off-season had seen the usual round of driver musical chairs, the most obvious being the replacement of John McIntyre with Aussie V8 Supercar racer David Besnard in the Hydraulink Falcon. McIntyre spent the winter months piecing together his own Falcon team, with sponsorship from BP. An interesting new addition to the series is the Commodore entered by Australian V8 Supercar team Tasman Motorsport, and driven by two-time NZV8



champion Andy Booth. However, Ford drivers completely dominated qualifying, underlining the parity problems. Angus Fogg put his Star-Mart Falcon on pole, with McIntyre alongside. Aussie Luke Youlden was third, while Paul Manuell, in fourth, was one of only two Holden drivers to break into the top ten, the other being Andrew Anderson, in sixth. McIntyre drew first blood, winning race one after Fogg spun while leading. Besnard moved from fifth on the grid to finish second. In race two he went one better. Grid positions for this race were taken from the lap times of race one, where Besnard had been quickest. From second on the grid, Fogg led initially, but Besnard soon displaced him. McIntyre slipped down the order from his third position, but recovered well to finish fourth behind Youlden. The first Commodore driver home, like that of race one, was

Manuell, in sixth. Race three featured a full reverse grid, which promised (and delivered) mayhem. 2006 champion Kayne Scott started from pole, after striking trouble in the first two races. But the speed advantage enjoyed by the Falcons was never better demonstrated than in this race. Besnard, starting at the back of the 28 car field, had hit the front at around the three-quarter distance mark, and held station to the flag. Scott finished second, the highest recording for a Commodore driver throughout the weekend, with Booth in third. Heading to round two at Ruapuna, Besnard, on 217 points, holds a comfortable 43 point lead over McIntyre, while the first Holden driver, Booth, is back in eighth, already more than 100 points shy of the flying Aussie. Not surprisingly, the Holden teams have demanded further changes to the parity situation before round two (see live wire on page 7 for more).





Port Road Drags

Words & Photos: Alan Blithe



Cam County Hot Rod club recently held the annual Port Road 1/8th mile Drags in Lower Hutt. This year it was a cracker, not to mention the 40th anniversary of the event.

First and foremost, I would like to say a big thank you to the organisers, Cam County, and the major players behind the event: Ed Junior Kustom Rides & Classics, Dave Hadley Tyres, PPG Paints, Century Batteries and the Hutt City Council.

Hutt City Council's presence is interesting. You often hear the younger import crowd moaning about how whoever won't do whatever for them, councils included. But look at this event – the Hutt Council is right behind it, and it's a credit to what you can achieve when responsible, like-minded people get together and run a good operation.

Being the 40th anniversary, the day had a lot to celebrate, so there was a bigger than normal field of comp cars, and a fair slice of nostalgia pie. Actually, the nostalgia pie was pulled from the oven fresh on Friday night at the Cam County clubrooms, where the Club held an open night. There was good beer, good food and good people. There were also videos from Port Roads past, and plenty of cool pictures on the walls. It was also very interesting to hear speeches from a couple of old hands who provided a window into how it all started from very humble beginnings. Top marks to those guys way back then who managed to con the local council into it, and who also made an event so good that it just grew and grew. Hats off to you, kind gents, and everyone who has helped out since.

I decided not to compete this year. My money tree needed more watering and I hadn't got a WoF or rego for my bucket in time. So when Sunday 12th November 2006 dawned, I looked out the window at 7am and it was raining, so thought, "Bugger that," and went back to sleep, figuring there was no way in hell the event would be happening. Getting up an hour or so later I suddenly noticed the weather had cleared. Making a few phone calls, I got through to a competitor in the staging lanes and found out things were ready to go! Shi!

The Hutt Valley weather turned it on in the form of a northerly wind, which was gusty at times, but the day was mostly sunny. The competitors turned it on, too, with some gutsy performances. There was a sixty-strong streetcar field made up of everything V8-engined. Hot rods, muscle cars, cruisers – hell there were a select few invited guests in non-V8-powered cars, too, and even some guy in a red hatchback (I think he was delivering pizza).

There was a solid field of strong competition cars with lots of FEDs – there was even Nasty Norris in his blown and injected alcohol-burning FED, right through to the more high-tech FED of Rodney Benges.

There were also a number of other cool comp cars out doing demo runs. These included Gary Cawthra in his nitrous-snorting XA Falcon (as featured in NZV8), and Pete Meo in his new toy, a blown, big block-powered Chevy Vega.

To round things out, there were a couple of drag bikes and some up-and-coming racers in their junior dragsters.

One of the real highlights of the day was seeing one of the original race cars from way back when Port Road first got off the ground. Well known local Shady Lane has got his hands back on 'Tom Slick'. This is no nostalgia rod, but an altered T that he raced back in the late '60s and early '70s; it's the real deal, and just how it was way back then. It was also back in Shady's hands and he repeated history, burning the midnight oil to get it ready to race at Port Road. It was great to see that piece of history going wheels up and burning out before peeling off another respectable 1/8-mile pass.

In mid-afternoon we got to see a few local rodders who needed to get out there and burst some tyres, followed by the cool custom chopper parade of some period-looking rides.

Crowd numbers were okay, and even though the Hutt's wind tried its best to blow the grandstand seating over, it was a good day. Loads of fast food to eat, heaps of cars to look at, and performance-plenty on the track. What more could you ask for?



RESULTS

Group 1 winner: Mopar Matt Gibbons upsetting Kevin Foothead in his rapid T Bucket.

Group 2 winner: Mark Coffey in his '33 Chev upset Darren Ritches in his cool Ford Pop.

Group 3 winner: Steve Walsh in his Holden 1-tonner upset Craig Neilson.

Group 4 winner: Aaron Teone in his '60s Dodge upset Kevin Golding.

Best Nostalgia: Colin (Shady) Lane with Tom Slick

Best Paint: Darren Ritches Ford Pop.

Long Distance: Nasty Norris with his cool FED.

Best Staging: as usual, Dave Fishwick with his 6-cylinder valiant that smokes like a house on fire.

Best Ford: Kevin Golding, '69 Mach 1 Mustang.

Best Chev: Mark Coffey, '34 Chev.

Best Mopar: Peter Enwhistle, '69 Plymouth.

Best Hotrod: Arthur Moraete, '28 Ford Tudor.

Engine Bay: Rodney Benjes, blown alcohol FED.

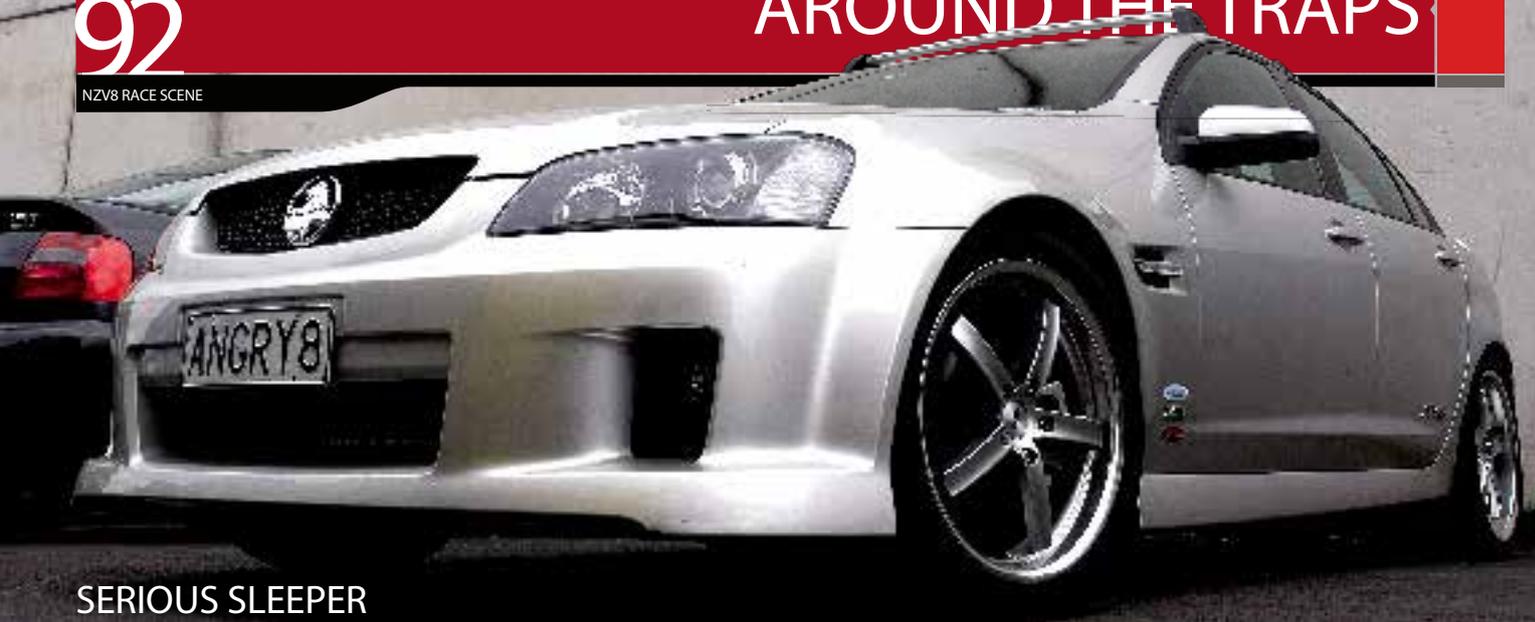
Fastest Lady: Joe Oliver, '69 Camaro.

Hard Luck: Graham Symes, apparently an accident on the way there involving a 4x4.

Best Street Machine: Alan Marshall, Ford Falcon XY GT.

Best other: Geoff Carlton, Buick.

John Coulter memorial trophy for new comer/rooky deservedly awarded to Mopar Matt's daughter, Jennie Gibbons, driving hmmm – a Mopar of course.



SERIOUS SLEEPER

Now this is one serious piece of kit. Lurking in the workshop at Eastern Automotive, this isn't just your run of the mill VE SS. This beast will happily show the HSV R8 on page 66 a clean pair of heels - and then some. This baby is pushing out something in the region of 700 ponies. Up in the engine room is a PWR blower providing all that extra get up and go. As Paul Manuell says himself, it's a heap faster than his own NZV8 Touring Car - and he has the painful job of having to drive it as his daily driver! But, of course, Paul and the team at Eastern didn't just stop with the go-fast bits up front. As you can see, this is not exactly what you'd call a standard ride

height, and those brakes hiding behind the aftermarket 20s are certainly not the ones the SS rolls out of the factory with.

So if you are after a package that will blow just about any new car into the weeds, then get along and see what these guys have to offer. And trust me, you don't have to ask Paul twice to take you for a demo - just make sure you take a change of undies.

Check out a future NZV8 issue as we'll be stealing the keys off Paul to see what this mean sleeper is really capable of.

Killer 57 Chevy

Imagine a '57 Chevy Sports Coupe that can out-handle and out-accelerate a Ferrari 550. Too crazy to be true? Well, Magoo's Street Rods is building just such a car for one lucky customer. The customer purchased the '57 Chevy Sports Coupe a couple of years ago in 'restored' condition from New York, only to find the resto was full-on dodgy, and covering up some serious body rot. He took it to Magoo's to right the wrongs, decided to go for a custom job, and ended up purchasing an Art Morrison Tri-5 chassis out of the States. This will replace the rusty original, under the properly restored '57 bodyshell.

Art Morrison chassis are designed to fit straight under the original bodyshell, without mods. Much stiffer than the original, they feature coil-over shocks all round, triangulated 4-bar rear, rack and pinion power steering, front and rear sway bars, and discs all round. Ride height is reduced by three to four inches, while the exhaust system runs through passageways in the chassis to eliminate any ground clearance problems. With no tubing at all, tyre widths up to 11.5 inches can be fitted under the standard guards.

Super Chevy magazine tested an Art Morrison-

built '55 Chevy project vehicle, after first driving it 1,200 miles from Tacoma to Las Angeles. They ran a series of speed tests, including 0-60mph, ¼ mile, slalom, skid pad, and 60-0. It was compared to a group of six new sports cars: a Honda NSX, BMW Z8, Chev Corvette C5, Ferrari 550, Ford SVT Mustang and Lamborghini Murcielago. Fitted with a 530hp 427ci small block crate motor, the old Chevy came up trumps against all apart from the Lambo in every test except the 60-0. It recorded 4.2sec for 0-60mph, a 12.6 ¼ mile, and an impressive 0.94G on the skid pad. Enough to make any boy racer's head spin! Is this the ultimate wolf in sheep's clothing? We'll bring you more pics as this killer coupe nears completion.



Taupo Gets Spantech®

Taupo Motorsport Park is expanding at a great rate of knots. Buildings are going up left right and center. The likes of Isaac Performance Vehicles are already up and running with their new building. Spantech® all-steel building systems, manufactured from the high grade steel components is at the heart of the track buildings progress. These guys really know who to build to whatever needs you have. For further information please contact Spantech® on free phone 0800 477 577



Rodding Museum

New Zealand hot rodding leading-lights Lloyd 'Magoo' Wilson, John Della-Mura, Peter Rodgers, and Steve Rogan have formed what is known as the New Zealand Hot Rodding Foundation (NZHRF), an incorporated society established to build a hot rod museum.

The museum will be in Masterton and the proposal is for it to be in the same new development area as Magoo's Street Rods. The NZHRF will hold events to raise funds for the museum and increase hot rodding's profile in New Zealand. These will be open to hot rods, customs, street machines, and muscle cars. Members will receive a number of benefits and discounts, and will be kept informed through an NZHRF bi-monthly newsletter. The aim of the NZHRF is to preserve the history and celebrate the impact of hot rodding. The museum will be constantly changing its exhibitions, and will feature everything from cars to artifacts to memorabilia. It will rely on rodders and enthusiasts loaning cars and collections to the museum, as it isn't in a position to purchase items. Although its founders will no doubt have plenty of interesting items to display, such as the vintage drag racer Magoo recently purchased on one of his US visits. As one of its goals is to promote hot rodding, there have been rumours the NZHRF has been created as an alternative to the New Zealand Hot Rod Association. This will, no doubt, continue to create interest.

The museum is set to open in the summer of 2008.

Corporate sponsorship, charter and individual membership opportunities are available now. For more info, contact the NZHRF c/- 49 Tararua Drive, RD 8, Masterton. Email: nzhotroddingfoundation@xtra.co.nz