



Classic Trials Championship 2014/15



Classic Trials Newsletter

ISSUE 019 June 2015



Hi everyone,

I hope this Newsletter finds you all fit and well. It seems like an age since the Legends meeting in March and the new season is still over 3 months away. Its that depressing time of year when you leave for work in the dark and arrive back home in the dark! However, we have organised something to cheer you all up.



It's time to finish any post-season repairs, change the oil and get ready for the mid winter outing.

The **PPG Winter Classic Trial Championship** is only 3 weeks away!

It will be held at Hampton Downs Motorsport Park as part of the **HRC Brass Monkey** meeting on Sunday 12 July 2015. As usual there will be a trophy up for grabs.

Entries are open now at www.motorsportentry.com



As you will have heard, **Hampton Downs** has been sold to **Tony Quinn**, the owner of the Highland Park circuit in Cromwell. The HD track extensions will now go ahead to give HD three tracks. Exciting times ahead for motor racing in Auckland. On behalf of the Register I would thank **Tony Roberts and Chris Watson** and their dedicated team for the vision and determination to make their dream a reality and Hampton Downs the premier circuit in NZ.

Thanks to **Ian Christie** for writing up an account of the South Island Track Tour that a number of Register members attended in March. It sure sounds like they all had a great time and another Tour will be arranged for a later date. Thanks too to **John and Jenny Miller** for the photos.





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Our only activity since the last Newsletter was a track day at Hampton Downs.

Paul Couper had finished his **Westfield 11** build and this was to be it's first blast on tarmac. (other than surreptitious midweek drives round the country roads of the Clifton Peninsular at Whitford) It turned out to be more of a water blasting as the previous days fine weather turned to rain.

Rain... absolutely grim driving conditions as it turned out. Two of our PPG sponsor team came out, Mark and Meri, both of whom had track time with Paul in the MX5 and in John Miller's Escort. Paul had



more spins in 5 laps than the entire season last year ! The Westfield did not have its windscreen fitted, which made the conditions more trying for Paul. He's entered it in the Brass Monkey and we're all hoping for less consistent lap times from this car!



BMW E36 Good news for BMW E36 owners: We will now accept your cars for entry in Classic Trials. While the 'official' 25-year period for E36's commences at the start of the 2015/16 Championship season at the end of September the committee will allow any interested drivers into the Brass Monkey meeting for an early experience.

Prize Giving Luncheon: Sunday 23 August: Horse and Trap Enfield St, Mt Eden

Mark the 23rd on the calendar! It's always a great get together before the start of the new season. Family, friends and any prospective Register members are welcome too.

I look forward to seeing you all at the PPG Winter Championship on 12 July.

Cheers

Ross



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2015 Track Tour of the South

The Classic Trials Register was well represented on this year's Playday tour of the South Island race tracks. These included; Teretonga (Invercargill), Highlands Park (Cromwell), Levels (Timaru) and Ruapuna (Christchurch).

The Playday South Island tour was very capably organised by Gary Stirling and Tony Bowman, who were excellent in providing advice about track requirements and places to visit on non-track days. In the months preceding the tour, the plans were gradually firmed up, and bookings arranged for the ferry crossings and hotel / motel accommodation.

The Trialists to head south were :

Peter Sullivan and Sheridan Broadbent sharing their Ford Cortina

Ken Smith, Ford Escort

John and Stephen Miller sharing their Ford Escort

Steve Moon, Morris Marina

Brian King, AJS Jaguar

Mike McCowan, MGB V8

Ian Christie, MGB

Murray Ralls, MG Midget

Graeme Hallen, Toyota MR2

Graeme Park, Murray Park and Haden Gordon in a Honda Prelude

Rogan Hampson, Cobra



We were to meet up for registration in Invercargill on Thursday 12th of March.

There were three groups of cars.

"Prestige Group," "Fast Group" and "Slow Group"

The group made their own way down the country with Peter Sullivan leaving early and combining a business trip on the way south, while Ken and Trish Smith took the opportunity to enjoy a few days cruising in the Marlborough Sounds and Graeme Park and crew purchased a Honda Accord on the way down. Graeme Hallen picked up Lorraine in Dunedin after she had completed the 'Mountain to Sea' bike ride challenge. Brian King joined the organized tour, driving south in four days via Westport, Wanaka and Te Anau.

The rest of us ambled down visiting friends and relations on the way. After leaving Dunedin, a number of us also detoured to visit the De Havilland wooden plane restoration centre at Mandeville. It is a little off the main route, but is highly recommended for anyone considering a trip to Otago as it has an outstanding display of early aircraft and is an interesting insight into the intricacies of this painstaking work.



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Unfortunately, the first casualty of the Tour was Mike Mc Cowan, who had medical issues on the Cook Strait Ferry. He and Pauline made it as far as Kaikoura where they went out on the Whale Watch Tour, then spent a night in Christchurch, before deciding to return home to Katikati.



Teretonga

At Invercargill, we officially registered for the Playdays Tour. Next morning we navigated the Invercargill non existent rush hour traffic to arrive at the track in heavy overcast conditions, which turned to showers and heavy rain throughout the morning but cleared in the late afternoon.

The cars were sent out for 15 minute runs which meant we were on the track every 30 minutes.

The Classic Trial made up a large proportion of the "Slow Group," joined by a couple of V6 Fiats, and a Toyota Corolla.

The track was interesting to drive with a very long front straight, a long tricky sweeper at the end, followed by a twisty section, then a fast run into a tight hairpin back on to the front straight.

The photo shows half the length of the straight in the rain.



There were a few spins: Graeme Park and crew coming to grips with the Prelude in the wet (on road tyres) proved a challenge after running his

Porsche. Graeme Hallen began having a few issues with the Toyota. Steve Moon struggled with his recently rebuilt motor and Ken Smith's cam belt was beginning to delaminate at the end of the day. This was a worry at 4pm on a Friday afternoon, but following a few phone calls, the car was taken to a local garage and a new belt fitted by 6pm. One of the other entrants in a Nissan Skyline blew a gearbox.

After a good day we had a relaxing evening mixing with all the other drivers

Next morning a group of us were most fortunate to be able to visit Richardson's Truck Museum.

This is an unbelievable collection of trucks, vintage cars, transport memorabilia and petrol bowlers. The curator apologized due to the fact that, as they are going through a rebuilding process, only 160 vehicles were on display. Many more are in storage around Invercargill.

The museum rebuild will be completed by the end of this year, and the collection will all be back under one roof. This was an absolutely fantastic place to go, and we didn't really have enough time to see and read all the information or all the items displayed, so a return visit will almost certainly be required.





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The next two days were free days and small groups stayed in Queenstown, Alexandra, Cromwell and Wanaka, enjoying the beautiful weather and scenery. Some took a trip on the Earnslaw up to Walter Peak Station and then saw some international mountain bikers practicing on a run parallel to the Gondola. Others took mountain bikes to a winery for lunch, or drove across the Crown Range to Wanaka.



Highlands Park

The big concern with Highlands was the strictly enforced noise limits in place at the race track. Some drivers were worried that they would get there only to find that their car exceeded the 95db limit, and they would then be excluded from running on this track. Fortunately, this did not prove to be a problem, although Steve Moon decided that his Marina was too noisy for the regulations and travelled to Dunedin over the weekend to swap the car for his late model MG Saloon.

Monday afternoon was track time. Again the weather was overcast and very cold, as can be seen in the photo, with a brisk wind.



The layout of the Highlands track is flat, but some of the corners can be deceptive because there are several layouts combined, and at ground level a few runs are needed to remember where you are heading.

The photo of the cars parked up at the track. In the foreground are some of the fast group which were mainly race cars and sports cars. The track has a couple of long corners with concrete barriers around the outside, with a large amount of car paint and tyre marks on some of the walls, especially on the sweeper past pit lane.

The runs were relatively incident free except for one of the sports cars which blew up a gearbox. Also, Graeme Hallen who had more trouble with his Toyota, and became the second casualty when he decided to head home.

The photo of the cars leaving for Timaru is taken outside the Cromwell Motorlodge before we headed out for a spectacular drive through the Lindis Pass, with a stop at Tarras for coffee and scones and an opportunity to meet Shrek the runaway sheep who is now resident there.



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The Levels

Timaru's local track is like the old Taupo Club track and a lot of fun. We were joined by a few more people who had come down to do the Levels and Ruapuna. They told us at briefing that trucks raced three abreast on this track. The track is relatively tight with plenty of interesting corners as can be seen in the photo of Peter, Murray and Stephen going through the chicane. Sheridan and Peter had a bit of a local advantage here as a friend who regularly raced there came out to tutor them during the day.



Following this day on the track we headed for Christchurch, with our final track, Ruapuna, scheduled for the next morning.

The Miller and Park's cars had new sets of tyres fitted for the last day. I think John thought his tyres would last, but did not factor in Stephen taking the helm and giving Ken Smith a serious challenge.

Ruapuna.

Another bitterly cold and wet day greeted us at this iconic track. Ruapuna is also an old school track with plenty of interesting corners that are both banked and flat, as shown in the photo of Sheridan, Stephen and Ken.

Brian King proved a handful in the wet for others to pass, once he got moving on the straight. Murray Ralls broke a tyre valve stem late in the day, but found a repair shop around the corner and they changed the stem with no charge, so he could get back for the last run of the day. A couple more gearboxes broke here, one of which was in Rogan Hampson's Cobra.



We had a final dinner in Christchurch, where a highlight was the screening of the track videos taken during the week, and the following morning we all headed for home.

The South Island Track Tour was a lot of fun and must be highly recommended as it is a great way to drive the southern tracks. In 4 days of driving we covered between 600 and 700 km in total, which is the equivalent to a full season of Classic Trials.

A few of us are looking at doing another trip in 2017 if they are still running.