



Concours d'Elegance

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Mini Car Club of Auckland

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April 2008

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The Mini Car Club of Auckland is an affiliate member of MotorSport New Zealand

Don't forget to touch base with:

<http://www.minis-auckland.org.nz>

Lots of goodies, the Club's points list,
and the mag in full colour!!

Deadline for the next issue:

15 May 2008

President Report

Warwick Robinson

Wow!! What a start to the year.

Motat: - around 35 cars turned up for a brilliant display and club Show-n-Shine. As well 7 cars from Kapiti Car Club came up. It was really great to see them all. Show-n-Shine results elsewhere in magazine and we achieved 3rd place for our display.

The following weekend at Concourse de Elegance was started with light showers. Our club spirit was demonstrated when around 20 members of the club beavered away unloading Robin Greenland's truck and setting up the display in the rain. Once again our thanks must go to Mike Bates and the South Auckland team in building, painting and trailer-ling the display. Our display looked truly brilliant and we were rewarded with 1st place and \$1000 prize. The results for the day are as follows:-

1 st Place	Club Display
1 st Place	People Choice – Kevin Tailors beautiful Blue Sportpack Mini.
2 nd & 3 rd	Gymkhana
5 th Place	Masters Class.

Cooks Beach Weekend – 22nd – 24th February was another great event. 1st team went down on Friday and stayed at Alan & Sheilagh Murie's bach, and the 2nd team departed BP Drury at 9.30am on Saturday – steady rain all the way to Cooks Beach where they stayed @ the bach of Mike and Jan Bates. Lunch was at the Bates with around 30 people including some Mini owners on holiday from Birmingham who happened to recognise Les Gubb's T-shirt and Les invited them to join us. Also some of the local members invited for lunch as well.

Saturday afternoon was a Fun Navigational Trial around Cooks Beach and Hot Water Beach area. Some really fantastic scenic views. Saturday night – dinner at Whitianga Club was great.

Sunday we were going to drive from Cooks Beach north through Whitianga and over the top route to Coromandel. About ¾ way there we were flagged down and told there was a slip on the road close to Coromandel – so our trip to Coromandel and the Driving Creek railway was off. We returned to Tairua for lunch and then made our way home. Once again our thanks to both the Bates and Murie's family's for accommodation.

Don't forget 31st May Queens Birthday weekend Mini Fun Day @ Taupo - so book accommodation early, and Mini Nationals – Labour weekend – Hamilton.

**EL PRESIDENTO
WARWICK**



“HMMM, which hairpiece will I wear tonight?”

This entry came from Andrew Cobb from Canada. I think Andrew and KP know each other from yester years...

Goes to show that our magazine is read all over the world.

Have a quick look at the back page for the next caption contest. This time it's a bit more of a car challenge.



TM

Captain's log

WOW!!!

What a busy couple of months and great results from the shows/events the MCCoA have attended.

First was the Dawn breaker run on Sunday 13th January, record number of club cars (21) turned out for this great event. Well done to Chris & Chris Roper for organizing such a fun run and an excellent café for breakfast.

Kumeu Classic car show and swap meet on Sunday 20th January. Also a good turn out of club cars, the show gets bigger and better every year.

Saturday 2nd February the club had a follow the leader run over the Awhitu Peninsula.

Meeting up at the Bombay Service Centre with seven minis from the Kapiti Coast Mini Club who made the long journey north. Seventeen cars all up including a local white mini on its first outing after full restoration (looks great Peter). The next day was Motat, Galaxy of Cars, 36 cars including Kapiti Coast minis were on display. MCCoA won 3rd place for best car display. Congratulations to the winners of the Auckland clubs show-n-shine and to the members of both clubs who participated.

The weekend of 9th –10th February saw the NZ Classic Car /Intermarque Concors at Ellerslie. Saturday had club members putting final detail to the clubs display and loading the truck. Another thanks to the members who turned up for the working B.

And a big thanks to Robin Greenland for transporting the display to and from Ellerislie. Sunday started early and a little damp the display went up without to many member getting wet or ripped pants. Not what could be said for a certain burgundy Cooper S that hadn't been rained on in 14 years?

What an **awesome** day for the club.

Kevin T winning the people choice award.

George and Kevin P placing 5th in the concours.

Mini team coming 2nd and 3rd in the Motkana event

MCCoA taking **1st place BEST CLUB** display.

Well done Mike and Jan Bates for all the hard work planning and building the display in the back yard and garage. Thanks

Weekend of 23rd –24th February saw the Bates and the Muries open their baches again this year to members of the club to have a fun weekend at cooks beach. Friday arrivals traveled to Hahei for dinner out. Saturday started with Les Gubb being chased by people while taking a drive to the local shop. It turned out that they were in NZ on holiday from Birmingham, England, and were members of a Mini club there. Of course they were invited to join us. With a couple of local mini club members as well there were about 30 people for shared lunch. After lunch a navigational trail. Then dinner at Whitianga that night. Sunday was the follow the leader run to Driving Creek railway. A slipped blocked the road so we had to turn back and had lunch at Tairua . and the return home. Despite the weather being overcast everyone had a great time. Thanks Alan ,Shelagh and Mike ,Jan (railway always next year perhaps ???)

Apologies for some events changing or being cancelled, most events take a long time to plan and unforeseen circumstances and insufficient interest can stop an event from proceeding .If members have ideas or places of interest the club could visit please let me know. 0274 881960 or club-Captain@minis-auckland.org.nz

Some exciting /interesting events coming up over the next few months, listings on the Web site and on the events calendar in this magazine. I know as usual members will get out and support these events

Murray



Editor ramblings

Petrol is getting dearer by the minute. Aren't we lucky we drive a Mini!!! Looking at the last Economy Run we are doing very well. There seems to be no end to the price increases of petrol and in my view, it's all about greed of the oil producing countries. At January 2004 a barrel of oil was costing US\$28. Today it is around US\$110 and it seems, there is no end in sight to the price increases. They are in control of what we pay for the oil and by limiting the production, creating an artificial shortage of oil, they jack up the price. On top of that we have the issue of having to pay for the oil in US\$. The greenback is worth next to nothing which inflates the price of oil immensely. It is time the oil is traded in a different currency like the Euro. Some OPEC countries, particularly in the Middle East mull over the idea to move to the Euro as the trading currency for oil. Had oil been traded in Euros, it would now probably not cost more than US\$80 and this increase would be purely created by the artificially created shortage of crude oil. And it would put a huge dent in the imago of the US dollar. Reducing the use of the US dollar as the trading currency would have an enormous symbolic impact.

And then we had the Easter Saturday Navigational Trial. ZERO fuel usage thanks the creativeness of Gary and Catherine. Absolutely brilliant. More about this event further down in this issue.

The club membership count is standing at 168, which is very good. But there are some people that think that paying subs is not for them. They show up at club night, participate in events, eat at your BBQ, etc, and all for free. This is not very nice. I think it's time that one should present his/her membership card when entering club events.

I've been producing our club magazine, with great pleasure, for the last nine years. But on all good things need to come an end. My wife and I are moving out of the Auckland district to go and live closer to our son in the Far North, who was struck down with cancer. This would make the production of our club magazine somewhat cumbersome. Well, what do you know. Ian Ferguson is going to take over the production of our club magazine. He will be doing the June issue with which I will give him a helping hand. I'm sure Ian is quite capable to produce a club magazine to everyone's liking. I would like to ask you to give him all the support he needs.

Signing off as Editor for the Mini Car Club of Auckland.
Frits Schouten.

Concours d'Elegance.

The results and the Photos.

12 months ago, we reflected on how we had raised the bar for club displays at the Intermarque Concourse d'Elegance at Ellerslie. After having been convincing winners in 2006, we had placed 3rd in 07 and came away probably feeling a little disappointed after the efforts that had been put into that display, but proud of what we had achieved. This year, rather than raising the bar, I think all members need to go to the bar and



Raising the bar

raise a toast to Mike and Jan Bates and their team who put the display together again. The theme for 2008 was to be “Our Golden Years”, an ideal theme for the Mini. The Pukekohe Crew must have spent a few hours at the bar, raising ideas, as well as glasses, for the display because the result was absolutely fantastic.

Wandering around the event, it quickly became obvious that we were again way out in front of all the other displays and it would be a travesty if the MCCoA was not

Raising the bar.

declared the winner. I had to wonder why this would be the case after the efforts many clubs had gone to in 2007. Eventually, a simple reason dawned on me - “Our Golden Years”! As we all know, the Mini, in its various forms, has had a rather lengthy golden period. From the cool, must have icon of the Swinging 60’s, the World Rally Championship winning cars, filling the first 9 places overall at Bathurst to taking second place in the “Car of the 20th Century” award, the Mini has had 50 Golden Years, with many more to come. There was plenty of material from which to choose a display. Our problem was what to leave out. Now, think of the other marques. When and what were their Golden Years. Thinking about last year’s winners, there is nothing specific which stands out apart from being a very desirable soft top sports car over a period of time. Hardly golden! The big American V8 muscle marque has no real race pedigree – it was a very desirable soft top sports car over a period of time. Hardly golden!



Other marques that might come close to us with their golden years simply could not compete with the PC brigade (that’s Pukekohe Crew, not the other PC Brigade we all know and love) and the design and setting of their display. Meanwhile the motokhana crews dishing it out to the other teams,

eventually Lee and Paul making the final against the ‘semi-pro’ MG team. Unfortunatley, after beating them in the heats, it wasn’t repeated, but coming 2nd to these guys is no disgrace.

The prize giving turned out to be very good for us. Kevin T winning the





“People’s Choice” award with his beautiful Rover Cooper, Kevin P and George taking 5th place in the Team Event with their Mark 2 Aussie Cooper S’s, Lee and Paul 2nd in the motorkhana and finally the MCCoA winning the Best Club Display.

We had done it again. I hope Mike felt a little glow of pride when he collected the prize on our behalf. It was, to quote a well known beer advertisement – “Earned”.



Our thanks and appreciation go to Mike and his team – another



job very well done.

Now, I’m off to the bar to raise a glass.....

And this are the results. The club did really well at Concours today...

Kevin Taylor won 1st for Peoples Choice in his 1999 Mini Sportpac reg no. BEBEAP.

Kevin Patrick and George (new member) got 5th Place in Show and Shine Team with their 2 cars.

Paul Crispe and Andrew Carter 2nd in Motorkhana and Kevin Patrick and Stephen Miller 3rd in Motorkhana.

Mini Car Club of Auckland - 1st for Best Club Display.

Pretty impressive eh!!



Galaxy of Cars

Only a few photos this time.



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Mini Web

MCCoA club magazine archive
<http://simple-pages.homeunix.net/mini/clubmags/index.html>



The Internet Mini Encyclopedia
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Goes to show how far away our Club Magazine is being read.

A note and photos from a Canadian reader:

Hi there, I'm an ex Aucklander living in Canada and enjoy reading your club mag. I think I recognize my very good friend KP in this photo. I am a member of the Winnipeg sports car club and flag marshall at our local road race circuit. We have a variety of cars mainly late model sedans etc ranging from tube frame 240 z to



mugen powered hondas but the favourites mine any way are the minis which we have here they were bought in from the uk about 2 seasons ago after running in the mini miglia series and after further development here really show the more modern cars the way. We run about 6 meetings a season during the

summer months and in winter we go ice racing on the frozen lakes or rivers, older model minis are very popular for this. There is a mini club in Winnipeg called the Mid Canada Mini Club and has a regular turn out of around 15 to 20 vehicles which is very good for this area. You can check out our website at www.WSCC.mb.ca and it will explain a little more of motorsport here on the prairies. Keep up the good work on keeping real minis on the road and if any one is passing through you can get my address from Kevin Patrick and we will try and show you a good time.



I have this one taken at a local car show when i was manning our club booth the mini in the photo was built by our local mini racer specifically for the New Foundland Targa a fantastic event similar to Dunlop Targa NZ he did very well getting third place overall beating Porsches etc and 1st in his class a great effort. Hope this is ok ...Andrew

IT'S THE BADGE, MADGE.

IT'S THE BADGE, MADGE
By Greg Wenzlick.

Now I'm the first to admit, I'm guilty of misrepresentation. A crime I committed as a 15 year old back in 1967.

I knowingly removed the Mini script badge off the boot lid of my father's 1965 Austin Mini 850, and replaced it with a Cooper script badge I had purchased from my hometown BMC dealer. The badge pin holes did not quite line up and Cooper was slightly misaligned.

I did this to try and make Dad's car look like one of those Mini Cooper cars that were winning Monte Carlo Rallies and the like at the time. Little did I know that the car bore no resemblance to a Cooper apart from being the same shape. There was no difference to the car's performance but my "ego" felt different, as if I was Paddy Hopkirk driving car #37 in Monaco. The local traffic cop asked me if I was Stirling Moss because I drove like him and he gave me a three-month hiatus from driving!

Unfortunately, for the general public and those who cannot identify impostors, this has been the bane of car buyers for years gone by. This seems to be more prevalent in used Japanese imports where Tokyo boy-racers try and out-testosterone rivals by adding badges not horsepower. A favourite badge is the revered "M" badge for BMW cars. People think they are buying an M3 when in fact it is a bog-standard 316i with bling wheels.

I quite often see advertised on Trade Me auctions, Minis being misrepresented as Cooper models. Those of us who have the knowledge and expertise, can spot a fake a mile off. And poor unsuspecting people get duped by vendors thinking they have bought a genuine Cooper. Imagine the disappointment if you just shelled out a small country's GDP on a fake car with no recourse.

I remember only just a few years ago, a secretary at my work declared she owned a Mini Cooper S. On examination I identified her car as an Australian Mini Clubman S, a rare car that had a 1098cc engine, Innocenti alloy wheels and highback seats with built-in headrests. Of course she disputed my identification because the seller told her it was a Cooper S and this had been verified by her father who was a "mechanic", one of those rare breed of grease monkeys who have a tool box and unofficial training done at Kerbside Motors. No amount of reasoning or rational would convince her she had anything other than a Cooper S. I took a deep breath and retreated shaking my head.

Fortunately, these days the Government has protection for purchasers of consumer goods – it's called the Consumers Guarantee Act and Fair Trading Act. This means you cannot sell something by calling it a different identity.

There is nothing like a reformed sinner – I now detest fakers and duds. There is an old saying – Caveat Emptor – let the buyer beware!

Carbon Footprint: Zero

Fox - (verb - transitive) to deceive or outwit somebody by means of sly trickery.

“I’ve never seen around these gardens” was the comment from Club Captain Murray as we waited for the start of the Navigational Trial With A Difference ’08. From the car park, the gardens looked spectacular on such a fine, sunny day - they almost made you want to ‘go for a walk’. Little did Murray know.....Little did any of us know!

Running an event on Easter Saturday was always going to be an unknown quantity, but such is the esteem that Gary’s trials are held, the Muries cut short their South Island holiday so that they could take part and one person had taken time off work to enjoy the fruits of Gary’s labour! In all, six cars turned up full of anticipation,



wondering just what Gary had for us this year. He boldly states that “his trials are like a box of chocolates - you never know what you are going to get!”

Well, you could have knocked us down with a feather when the instruction sheets were distributed. Gary seemed to be taking the Global Warming issue very seriously here.... the trial was to be held in the Botanic Gardens and not a drop of petrol was to be used. This was to be a foot race! It could be said at this point that this was definitely different. A quick glance at the questions showed there were no clues to where to start or where to go.



Questions like ‘What did Virginia King create?’, ‘What is the roof of the tunnel made from?’ and ‘What is in the nest?’ The answer to that had to be ‘eggs’, but knowing Gary, I shouldn’t assume the obvious. What’s this about a submerged dinghy! Be back in the Café by 3:00pm! Easy - no, hard! Have you any idea how big the Botanic Gardens site is?



Parked just inside the main entrance were a few mobility scooters. Later, how I wished I strapped one leg up, hobbled up to the reception and begged to use one. Have you any idea how big the Botanic Gardens site is and how extensive the labyrinth of pathways is? I’ve been there a few times and I had no idea. I would swear that there are 15 “Loop Roads” throughout the site, but the map only shows one. Trying to match the deviousness of the organizer, I reckoned the answers would all be ‘off the beaten track’ so began my wanderings around the boundary areas. I went through native rockeries, palm plantations, Camellias, Magnolias, Succulents, Roses and native forests. At times it appeared I was in some tropical rainforest and expected to see Tarzan swinging from tree to tree, not driving his ‘Mazda tree two tree’ as this was a ‘carbon footprint: zero’ navigational trial. Walking through the native forest was blessing in disguise because at least it was cool in there. It made you appreciate how natural native forest can easily catch ill-prepared people out, even on hot and sunny days.



I noticed on the map there was a back entrance to the gardens in the Northwestern corner and thought of Gary. There was probably an answer to one of the questions there. After walking to what seemed to be the Manukau City Centre, through what could have been the South African high veldt (and the spears and shields confirmed this, guess what - nothing. Ahhh... outfoxed by Gary yet again! About now, I wished I’d bought a bottle of water and cut my leg off to get a mobility scooter. Have you any idea how big the Botanic Gardens site is! Nothing at the ‘Manukau City Centre’, so I guessed I’d better walk



to Ardmore to check out that area. The Southeastern corner provided rich pickings for answers and there I found 'The Nest' in the Children's Playground. Guess what was in 'The Nest'an egg. Ahhh... outfoxed by Gary again. The tunnel was also here, made of ponga logs, but I wasn't going in to check there wasn't some obscure lining to

the roof to stop the kids from bumping their heads or something by orders of the PC brigade. That's not the well known Puke Crew brigade led by Mike and Jan, but the other mob we all know and love. Turns out there was nothing, ponga logs was the answer - Haa, I've outfoxed Gary this time!

A quick time check shows that time is running out and there's still a few questions to answer. Trying to pick up the pace wasn't easy because it feels like I've power walked a marathon, but needs must. Collecting all but 1 answer I headed back to the café in time for the 3:00pm



deadline. After a flash of oxygen starvation fuelled brilliance (but no petrol because this is a carbon footprint: zero trial), I decide to ask about the one remaining question at the information desk. To my surprise, they haven't heard of the statue or the inscription. I know that Gary would not put a question in with no answer so, Ahhh...outfoxed by him yet again.

Off to the café and hand the answer sheet in. Then off to the counter and buy bottles of water in order to replace the litres lost during this jaunt. I wonder how many of my hard won carbon tax credits now have to be traded in for the supply of plastic bottles. At this point, I don't mind as I'm certain we'll all be on the right side of the ledger. About a month's worth of exercise I reckon! By the numbers of bottles of liquid refreshment, I'm not the only one feeling the dehydrated pain.

Around the tables, discussions centre on what answers you got for what questions, did you get an answer for a particular question and groans when finding out what the answer to the statue inscription was. That question was Gary at his most fox-like. At least one person got it, because the winner scored an impressive 14 out of 14. Well done Erena, a new member to the club. "Now I know why I've never walked around these gardens!"

How do you summarize this event. An unqualified success? Different? Eco-friendly with carbon footprint: zero? Thoroughly enjoyable? A surprise?

Answer: All of the above! As Gary seems to get his inspiration for these events while mowing the lawn, let's all hope he mows the lawn more often!

Results:

1st: Erena Warrington
2nd: Gavin Agnew
3rd=: Murray and Shirley Grant
Kevin Taylor
5th=: Alan and Shelagh Murie
John and Steven Millar

MINI News

MINI CLUBMAN ARRIVES IN NZ

Our super sleuth spy Hermin, advises that the first of the MINI Clubman models have been sighted in NZ on their way to MINI NZ Headquarters. Getting up-close and personal, Hermin reports that the MAXI-MINI lives up to it's hype and expectation and will find a home in many MINI garages.



On first glance, the special features of the car are the ribbed roofline, the rear double doors, and the forward opening third side door.

Commonly referred to as the Club-door, the feature is about as useful as a club-foot, and those lucky enough not to trip over the driver's

seat belt holder on their way out, may find on-coming traffic a danger when alighting from cars parked in normal roadside positions. Getting your old Grandparents into the back remains a feat to behold.



However, the short-sighted decision not to make a right-hand drive version with the clubdoor on the left hand side will be forgiven by keen owners who can remember the old Countryman and Traveller versions of old. The bonus will be extra room for long-legged passengers without compromising handling and the iconic looks

of the MINI product.

We look forward to professional media reports after the press and public release of the car in late March.

MINI MAYHEM AT MANFEILD

For those of us who can remember the old Morris Minor Traveller and Mini Countryman and Traveller versions with the exterior wood framing, the news is that Italian car customiser Carrozzeria Castagna the Milanese design house has brought us wave after wave of unique creations who loves tinkering with little retro hatches is looking to continue its



grand tradition of peculiarity at the Geneva Motor Show this week. The MINI Woody Passion Kit (try saying that three times fast) is fairly straightforward



because MINI already makes a wagon, so Castagna has put together a package of trim pieces for the Clubman in contrasting dark and light woodgrain effects.

MINI MAYHEM AT MANFEILD.

Round 4 of the NZ MINI Challenge Series was at Manfeild Raceway over the weekend of 16th and 17th February.

In Saturday's qualifying the top seven were within 0.726 of a second of each other and the next seven was only 0.484. Only 2 seconds covering the whole field of sixteen cars. A combination of excellent pace and a new track surface saw several cars under the lap record.

Auckland's Courtney Letica had pole with Gavin Dawson (Auckland) beside him. Row 2 was Keeley Pudney (Atiamuri) and beside him Brent Collins (Timaru).

There was only 3/1000th of a second between these four. Youngsters Letica and Pudney have really laid down a challenge to Dawson and Collins who are both very experienced.

Race 1. There was a big crowd out today. Gavin Yortt had blown an engine in qualifying and did not start (dns). Courtney Letica went off in the first corner probably due to cold tyres. He later had a 'coming together' with another MINI so parked it up. Pudney won it from Collins and Anthony Houston surprising even himself with a 3rd having come through from 7th on the start grid. Collins was 4th and Rhys McKay 5th.

Race 2. This was to be a race full of high drama – enough to warrant television news coverage ! It all started with three cars, line abreast going into Dunlop and nobody yielded. James Kirkpatrick came off the worst and went into the wall at approximately 180 kph, backwards. Again testament to the construction and safety of the MINI the Kirkpatrick was not injured although the car was somewhat 'worse for wear'. The second car involved was David Grigor's and he went into the tyre wall frontwards and damaged the steering. The third was Adam Dobbs and he was able to continue.

The rest of the field circulated for one lap in Indian File to the rolling start. Anthony Houston ran his line into Turn 1 with Gavin Dawson holding a very outside line. There was contact and Houston flipped onto his roof and Dawson parked his in the gravel. Courtney Letica won it from Brent Collins, Rhys McKay, Craig Innes and Adam Dobbs. Keeley Pudney's time would have had him 2nd but a 'driving behaviour' penalty that cost him 50 seconds and he finished 12th.

Race 3. Martin Collins, MINI Challenge Co-ordinator said "Motorsport Services did a marvellous job getting Anthony Houston's car in back out on the track in just four hours. Gavin Dawson has a kink in his roll cage and for safety reasons cannot restart." Race 3 was a top 10 reverse grid however there no such dramas as those in race 2. Great to see Gavin Yortt put it all together and hold off Keeley Pudney for the win. 3rd was Gary Johnstone and 4th was the new rookie Martin Hunt from Wellington in the Money Works sponsored MINI that has seen several drivers take their turn. He did well to hold off Craig Innes, Brent Collins and Rhys McKay who were all over him.

On the Podium for the weekend races were 1st Brent Collins, 2nd Keeley Pudney and 3rd Rhys McKay.

Round 5 of the NZ MINI Challenge Series started at Timaru's Levels International Raceway.

The Levels Raceway is a circuit the drivers look forward to – it's a special place. It is 2.4 kms long and spectators are close to the action atop the embankments that surround the circuit. The South Canterbury Car Club do an excellent job and the circuit is very well presented.

DAY ONE

It was overcast for qualifying in the morning and Rhys McKay (Auckland) took pole just 0.174 ahead of Timaru's favourite racer, Brent Collins. Local knowledge from Collins counted when it was suggested that Pole 2 was actually the better line in the conditions. Craig Innes (Taupo) was 3rd and Keeley Pudney (Atiamuri) 4th. Adam Dobbs (Papakura) qualified 5th. Only one second separated the top twelve. In the penultimate lap of the session a loud knocking noise was emanating from Courtney Letica's car – gearbox failure. Ryan Grant (Wellington) had purchased the only spare gearbox the team from MINI Challenge had with them and already had it in the Money Works car. Gary Johnstone (Christchurch) had one at home and quickly had it on it's way and sent a runner from here to meet them halfway. Then another team offered a spare and with the clock ticking away they took that last offer and had Letica out in time for the first race.

By mid afternoon the rain had arrived and the entire field were on their Dunlop wets. Maybe a bit more wing adjustment on the rear as well – one click helps in the wet. By race time the rain had stopped but the track was slippery off the racing line.

Collins got the jump at the start and McKay slotted in behind him and there was a gap to Pudney. Gavin Yortt was down in the field and had a spin at the end of the very fast main straight. On Lap 3 Collins had a four car lead and Pudney was close on McKay and Innes was closing in on the top three. Houston and Timms

were further back in their own battle. Back again was Leticia, Johnstone just ahead of Turton and Dobbs. A lap later Turton and Dobbs were past Leticia and Johnstone. Meanwhile Collins had a ten car lead and Inees was right on Pudney's bumper.

The Race officials announced Collins and McKay had both been penalised 5 seconds for jumping the start. Pudney takes McKay and Innes has a go at McKay but backs out. By now Houston is clear of Timms who has now been caught Turton and Dobbs. What difference will the 5 seconds make?

A big difference!! Pudney wins by 1.5 secs to Innes and 1.2 to Collins and 3.7 to McKay. Then it was Houston, Dobbs, Turton, Johnstone, Timms, Leticia.

DAY TWO

The 8 lap Race 2 was the same grid as Saturday's Race 1 and was underway at 10am.

The points were at a very interesting stage with Brent Collins on 734 and Rhys McKay on 701. Keeley Pudney's win in Race 1 earned him 75 points and he was now on 696.

As MINI Challenge's co-commentator Mike Eady said 'the bonus of an early start is the air is still cool so the supercharger is producing better horsepower.'

Wellington's Grant Ryan was on the back of the grid having not started Race 1 and missing was Shaun Turton who started two laps into the race.

This time McKay in P1 got the better start - both he and Collins taking care not to creep on the line and get penalised as they did on the previous day. Going into the right, left, at the end of the start straight McKay has a car length on Collins but Collins slips through on the immediate left hander. Innes pushes him wide and he slips from 3rd to 6th - an experiment with less tyre pressure did not pay off. Lap 2 and Dobbs and Leticia both have a scary moment onto the grass. Lap 3 and through the start straight Innes is up on two wheels. Lap 4 and the leading three of Collins, McKay and Pudney have pulled a gap. Lap 5 it's the same

order and Innes is right on Letica - obviously heat has got the tyre pressures up. Dobbs has now caught the top 3. Last lap and Innes and Letica are side by side at the end of the main straight and Innes is through.

Tony Houston is down in 13th with a flat front left - a collision having sheared off the tyre valve seat. The top 8 order was Collins, McKay, Pudney, Dobbs, Innes, Letica, Johnstone and Grigor.

Race 3 was a reverse order for the top 10 cars and 12 laps. By now the temperature had dropped dramatically and there was a howling southerly. The start was almost delayed as a very large Ezi-Up gazebo became airborne and ended in a tangle of aluminium frames.

The race started off with Collins back in 10th place for the reverse grid and all of a sudden he was dead last. 'I was a bit too eager' Collins said after the race, 'I went from 1st gear to 4th !!'

James Kirkpatrick, Craig Innes and Gary Johnstone were trading places at the front as was the mid field. To tell you all the place changes would really bore you silly as there was plenty. Feature was the chase on the field by Collins who broke the MINI lap record with a 1:13.075. That was almost a second quicker than the eventual winners fastest lap. Once Collins caught and passed the tailenders and was mid pack his progress stalled as any attempt to pass was blocked.



Collins pips McKay for the lead through the first corners in Race Two.

There was a big moment in lap 6 when Adam Dobbs spun at speed and hit the tyre barrier very hard. The car took the impact on the front and right hand side and Dobbs was lucky to walk away. The Safety Car was despatched and once restarted they were all in a freight train. Grant Ryan went off backwards but suffered no damage. Right to

the flag they were all very close with three cars crossing the line abreast. They had run an extra lap so the results posted were in fact from the previous lap - all very confusing.

Innes won it by two seconds from Kirkpatrick, Johnstone, Timms, Pudney and McKay who were all within the same second. David Grigor was 7th and Collins 8th. A video of Dobbs crash was showed and it was big indeed.

NZ MINI Challenge series – Final Round 6

Teretonga Park Raceway, Invercargill. March 8th and 9th 2008

Heading into the final Round 6 at Teretonga Park near Invercargill, the world's southernmost FIA circuit, one of three drivers in the MINI Challenge could take the Championship away. Brent Collins (Timaru) on 848 points, Rhys McKay (Auckland) on 813 and Keeley Pudney (Atiamuri) on 805. Each driver was also



Craig Innes leads Courtney Letica early in Race 1.

he had ever driven on the track. His time was a 1:08.955. Differing conditions in the second session at 3pm, it was raining and the times had dropped to 3:15's. Letica was pressing on and unfortunately put his car on it's roof, in a slow roll, at the Southern Loop. The good news it was an easy repair.

'rewarded' with 50kgs weight penalty. After a huge side impact at Timaru round, Adam Dobbs and his team obviously had a very busy week getting the car repaired for the free practice on Friday.

In the first session at 10am Courtney Letica was on 'good' tyres and fastest by over half a second which in itself is quite an achievement as it is the first time

All eyes were on the qualifying times in the morning because with racing just so close, a top 4 time, was essential. In fact the top 14 were all within 1 second of each other.

The top 10 was: Letica, Innes, Collins, Grigor, Yortt, McKay, Pudney, Dobbs,

Timms and Kirkpatrick.

Race 1 was at 3.40pm was in sunshine with a little wind.

They were all away safely and we have witnessed MINI Challenge 'freight-trains' before but it has never been seen like this with the entire field.

Five laps in and Letica had an attempt on Innes but was taken wide. Letica was given a drive-through penalty. Maybe he should have backed out but the chance was certainly there. Worse was to come because it earned him 3 demerit points on top of the 3 he already had, so for Race 2 the next day he was off the back of the grid.

It was an uneventful race from there apart from Shaun Turton and Anthony Houston coming together and continuing the race.

The freight-train continued to the flag. Innes won by .391 to Collins and .291 to McKay. There was a 1.2 second gap to David Grigor then 2.5 seconds to Houston, Pudney and Yortt who were bumper to bumper. It was then 1 second to Dobbs and another to Hopkins and Timms who crossed line abreast.

Race 2 of 8-laps was held on Sunday at 10.00am in overcast skies, a damp track and gales. Rhys MacKay was given a drive-through penalty after coming in contact with Gavin Yortt on lap 5. Previous Race winner Craig Innes retired on lap 5. Pareora driver Brent Collins won the race from Keeley Pudney and David Grigor in third place.

Race 3 of 10-laps reverse grid was held at 2.30pm in windy dry conditions. Auckland driver Courtney Letica won the race from Gary Johnstone and Keeley Pudney in third place. Brent Melhop dropped out on lap 1.

Collins took the NZ MINI Challenge series championship after finishing tenth in the final race despite being involved in a coming-together during the race.

NZ MINI Challenge series Championship 2007/08

- 1.. Brent Collins, Timaru, 1023 points
- 2.. Keeley Pudney, Atiamuri, 977 points
- 3.. Rhys MacKay, Auckland, 948 points

Mini Events

SATURDAY 22 MARCH - Navigational Trial with a difference. Starting from the Auckland Regional Botanic Gardens, Hill Road, Manurewa. Meet in the gardens car park at 1.00pm for a 1.15pm start. Gary and Catherine ran one of these in 2007, which was well received by all who participated, but they have added a new twist for 2008!!! Bring a passport, pen and clipboard and join us for something different. Contact Gary Ashton 021 621230.

SUNDAY 30 MARCH - Karaka Vintage Vehicle & Machinery Day. Meet at 7:30am at Karaka Green, corner Linwood and Blackbridge Roads, Karaka (off the southern motorway at Papakura, heading toward Karaka approx 8km) All cars must be in on display by 9am. Club will have BBQ for lunch. Contact Murray Grant 0274 881960

TUESDAY 1 APRIL - Club Night. MCCoA Swap Meet. Clear out those cupboards, empty those dusty shelves and bring your Mini bits along to sell. Remember, your trash could be another's treasure. **Newsflash: The new MINI Clubman will be attending our Club night tonight. Come along and give it a good going over and see for yourself the new model, as well as buying lots of Bling from the swap night.**

SUNDAY 13 APRIL - Activity Fun Run. Meet and assemble at Fred Amber lookout Gladstone Road, Parnell, (Over looking container wharf) at 1pm. Contact Murray Grant 0274 881960.

FRIDAY - SUNDAY 18 - 20 APRIL - V8 Supercars at Hamilton (info only).

SATURDAY 3 MAY - Triathlon Trial starting from BP Drury and finishing in Manurewa. Starting from the BP Service Centre between Papakura and Drury on the Southern Motorway at 8:00am, this trial promises to challenge and entertain all involved. There will be great roads, traditional trial instruction, plus a number of different concepts to challenge the mind. With a stop for morning tea and another for lunch, this monster will finish about 3.00pm for afternoon tea. Contact Gary Ashton 021 621230

TUESDAY 6 May - Club Night. The guest speaker for this night will go through the finer points of getting your car prepared for the Fun Day at Taupo and how to get around the Taupo track quickly and

Mini Events

safely. An evening not to be missed for those attending the Fun Day.

SATURDAY 31 MAY - Mini Fun Day - Taupo. There will be a Club convoy leaving the BP Services, Drury, at 1:00pm on Friday 30th May.

TUESDAY 3 June - Club Night.

ADDITION TO PROGRAMME.

SUNDAY 8 June - The Italian Job. The annual Italian Job trial will take place through the streets of the Central City. Drive roads that you may not have been on before in this feast of tight, twisting roads, never far from the CBD. You will need a Navigator, Clipboard, Pencil and Map! Meeting time and place will be posted shortly. If you only do 1 or 2 events a year, make sure you do this one and make sure the brakes are in top class order as they will get a working over.

SATURDAY 21 June - Night Trial. Starting from the BP Service Centre between Papakura and Drury on the Southern Motorway, Meet at 5.00pm for a 5.15pm start. This is our traditional night trial that takes in some of Franklin District's best roads and finishes for dinner. Contact: Gary Ashton 021 621230

TUESDAY 1 July - Club Night.

SATURDAY-SUNDAY 24th –25th OCTOBER (Labour Weekend) - NZ Mini Nationals, Hamilton. Hosted by Minis Waikato. Watch this space for more details regarding accomodation, convoys down etc. as it comes to hand.

For more information on upcoming events please check our home page. at <http://www.minis-auckland.org.nz/>

Photo Caption Contest



Caption contest. Give us your caption that goes with the photo above. The best will be published in the next magazine.

Send your caption before 15 May 2008 to:

editor@minis-auckland.org.nz