



# WHEELSPIN

December 2018

[www.hccc.org.nz](http://www.hccc.org.nz)

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## COVER PHOTO

### Rally driver's Lament

Committee : 3<sup>rd</sup> TUESDAY : 1841 Disraeli Street Johnsonville, 7:30pm, everybody welcome

Club-night : 1<sup>st</sup> TUESDAY of the month, 1841 Disraeli Street Johnsonville, 7:30 pm.

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Wheelspin is the official magazine of the Harbour Capital Car Club, PO Box 4102, Wellington.

Opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the Club or Committee.

To other Car Club Editors: While we do not object to other magazines using articles or material from our Wheelspin, we do appreciate recognition of the source of said material. Originals are usually available on request.

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#### DEADLINE

The Deadline for Wheelspin articles is the 20<sup>th</sup> of the month approx.

# CLUB NIGHT

**1841 Pub** (Upstairs)

**1 Disraeli St, Johnsonville** (next to the BP)

**TUESDAY 4th December 2018 @ 7:30**

**Guest Speaker: Brent (86) Sellens.**

Remember **NEXT MEETING** after Dec is the **AGM** on  
**February 5<sup>th</sup> 2019**



A non-driving month has snuck into my calendar. I'm not quite sure how that happened, but perhaps my oft spoken claim to be focusing on gravel events rather than sealed events has actually made a difference?

With of course the disclaimer that I was going to do the Manawatu multi event weekend, but the weather was looking so grim for the Saturday part of the event, that I wasn't keen to risk the 86 on the well worn tarmac tyres, so I doubted that the water dispersal properties would have been adequate. The Corolla I don't mind sliding around a bit, but that's kind of a lot cheaper to crash than the 86.

My only motorsport type venture, was heading up the watch the MG Classic race meeting, in the previously mentioned 86, but purely in road car and spectating mode.

I probably should have gone up on the Saturday rather than the Sunday, as the fields were much depleted from various mechanical (or accidental car merging) incidents. There seemed to be a lot of exotic cars no longer featuring on the track, despite appearing in the program.

The racing varied quite a bit, although I thought a few of the classes could have done with slightly bigger grids to liven things up a bit.

The Tranzam's were exactly like they were back in the "good old days". By which I mean, they were fast, but like six cars started, one broke down on the formation lap, and then another few conked out during the race. Which is exactly what I remember the glory days of the Tranzam class looked like! Possibly not a popular opinion, but I'd much rather watch 30 cars that are far slower, but having a close race, rather than watch a half dozen cars, which are fast, but basically don't overtake during a race.

There are some crazy quick cars out there in a few different classes, and some of the vaguely classic looking cars seem to be sporting a lot of wicked machinery lurking under old looking panels.

Probably the smallest number of Porsche's that I've seen racing at a classic event, but I have to wonder if the utterly bonkers prices being fetched by Porsche badge might be having an effect.

There was a Dattory (Datsun running a rotary) who had quite an impressive presumably engine failure. He pulled off on the Denny Hulme straight, followed by a wee pool of fire. Which resulted in a series of small grass fires on the infield, attended by the rescue vehicles, so everything stayed under control.

Some of the muscle car type classes provided some excellent engine noises, and some wickedly fast cars, but I think the prettiest cars were in the classic/historic single seater field. Some of the old racing cigarettes are very aesthetically pleasing bits of machinery.

Looking ahead at some of the local upcoming events, don't forget our Clubnight guest speaker, Brent Sellens, December 4th. Then further afield to Wairarapa Car Club's Dorset's Road hillclimb on December 9th, followed a week later by our second autocross round in Masterton on 16th. You're then allowed (if you insist) to take a few weeks off racing, so long as you're back by January 13th which is the third and final round of our first Masterton Rubber Duck Trilogy.

Thinking about March 2019, Wairarapa is running the Clubsport Championship (the portfolio is available on the MSNZ website).

Traditionally, HCCC is very very strong in getting entries in to these events, no matter where around the country the event is held, be it Auckland or Invervegas.

But in '19, I think we might be doing a bit of a juggling act between entering, and assisting.

So bear in mind, that if you're not thinking about entering the Championship, then consider if you're able to step forward to help out at some stage (or various stages) over the weekend.

It's going to be a grass motorkhana and autocross at the venue we're currently using, and the Tea Creek gravel hillclimb (which can be entered without a cage, but can be a bit rugged on low cars).

Motorkhana's in particular are quite high in manpower required.

As I've mentioned previously, I've been trundling around in a Swift Sport to see if it was the future of my motorsport machinery, as they're similar to the Corolla, but with smaller overhangs (useful for narrow gravel roads), but they have the advantage of being way easier to get parts for than a 1987 Corolla (and are less rusty).

It is a nice little road car, and is fulfilling duties of being economical and comfortable, as well as being fun to throw at corners.

But while it has more torque than the Corolla, it just doesn't really have enough ultimate get up and go. So it might be okay to use as a competition car at some undetermined time after I've thrown the Corolla at a tree, it definitely isn't good enough to start building into a race car, as a part of a scheduled Corolla retirement.

Ideally I think the sweet spot at the moment would probably be an EG model Corolla, but with a gruntier engine onboard. That would get me going a bit faster than the Corolla, and give me a new class to play in. But of course, while they are vastly better catered for in engine and gearbox upgrade options, they too might all be completely rotten and/or made of unobtanium in a few years time.

Neil Roots sums it up pretty well, in that all the new stuff is just too heavy. Even the Swift weighs pretty much bang on the same as the old Corolla.

Pity that the old stuff is rusty now, or difficult to find.

So I'll probably get out of the Swift by Christmas time.

With the nearest gravel rally being Tauranga, it's just about at the point now where I have to reconsider if I want to get a tow rig, so I can actually get the Corolla to some of the further afield gravel events. I'm only really willing to drive the Corolla 1.5 to 2 hours max as a there and back gravel mission in a day. Beyond that, it's not the most comfortable

vehicle to travel in, and it would be rather a nuisance to try to retrieve a broken Corolla from half way up the country.

But as you all know, my number 2 hobby after racing, is to randomly buy cars to see what they're like! So I'll probably end up with another several cars a year, and never actually settle down with anything other than the Corolla (which I've had for a very long time now).

That's probably enough nonsense from me this month, and I know Jilly is going to be trying to put the bulletin together (Len is off galivanting on an overseas holiday, again), so best I get this sent away pronto.

Hopefully I will see some of you at Clubnight, or one of our next two grass autocross events!

Don't be afraid to put any sort of magazine contribution together, it doesn't have to be the endless rambling I come up with. Any contribution of words or motoring photos, however small that contribution is, is something that the editor doesn't have to go hunting for! So send it in.

Cheers  
Leon

## **Membership renewal time - Expiry on 31.12.2018**

Hi all, yes it is Membership renewal time again. There are no changes to the annual fees for 2019 so look out for the renewal letters that will be coming out in early December.

You can go onto the club website and renew from here without waiting for the snail mail version, this is the fastest way to get this process underway as it sends an email directly to me, so please do follow this path at any time.

PS don't worry if the online tool still has the current year.

Thanks all

Jilly Fisher



# Wellington Motorsport Association Calendar 2018

As at December 2018

November	23		Silver Fern Rally		North Island	
December	1		Silver Fern Rally		North Island	
	2					
	8		Circuit Sprints	Manawatu	Manfeild	
	9	↑ GG	Race (Summer series)↑ Gravel Sprint	Manawatu↑ Wairarapa	Manfeild↑ Dorsets Road	↑ GS
	15					
	16		Autocross	Harbour Capital	Motorplex Paddock, Masterton	KN
	22					
	23					
January	13		Autocross	Harbour Capital	Motorplex Paddock, Masterton	KN

Abbreviations		Club Contacts		Stewards	
KN	Kim Naylor Autocross Series	Levin	027 442 1639 (Chris)	AW	Alan Wright
DM	Duncan McKenzie Sealed Sprint Series	Hutt Valley	027 439 7616 (Neil)	GG	Gordon Gandy
ST	Stewards Trophy Motorkhana Series	Wellington	021 717 676 (Jody)	GM	Gus McMillan
VB	Vesta Battery round of ST series	Harbour Capital	027 6996 838 (Leon)	JR	John Rapley
GS	Gravel Sprint Series	Kapiti	027 446 9986 (Bryan)	PT	Paul Te Punga
RT	Road and Track Sprint Series	Wairarapa		SM	Stephen Marks
RS	Rallysprint Series	MG	04 970 8644 (Terry)	TS	Tracey Stringer
IM	The Surgery Intermarque Sprint Series	Intermarque	027 232 2523 (Alan)	WG	Wayne Gair
Nat	National meeting	Dannevirke	j_pperformance@hotmail.com	CF	Craig Findlayson
NT	Night Trial Series	Manawatu	manawatucarclub@xtra.co.nz		
Sc	Ron Scanlan Trophy Series	Wanganui	barbaramgray@gmail.com		
ERS	Engine Room Series	Hawkes Bay	donna_elder@clear.net.nz		

## VW Golf GTI For sale:



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Body Silver, 5 door, Hatchback	Seats 4	Fuel type Petrol
Engine 4 cylinder, 1800cc	Transmission Manual	History 2 owners, Imported
Registration expires Sep 2019	WoF expires Dec 2018	

Contact: Hayden Nicholson

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The “Rally Ka” files.

You know how I said in my last report that my next event wasn't until December 16th? Well, I stumbled across another event on Facebook. This one is up in Dannevirke, and fellow HCCC member Neil Roots entered in a previous round in his mighty Honda City and said it was good fun. This had me intrigued and especially because this autocross is on gravel and gravel rally sprints and rallies are my goal, I thought I'd better at least give it a try. Also, there is a gravel sprint that is part of the Clubsport Nationals and this may be my only chance to get a feel for the Ka on gravel before then.

Anyway, in the week before the trip to Dannevirke I learned a very valuable lesson; always check your car out as soon as possible after an event, and not a few days before one. I took the car for a spin and found out a CV joint was making some funny noises. I called a few wreckers and managed to source a used drive axle from Masterton, which would be delivered to me by Friday, (2 days before Dannevirke). Friday came and I still had no drive axle, so I called the wreckers, and the guy there informed me that the part wasn't any good and had been incorrectly listed in their inventory, but they had found me another one and I should receive it by Monday - bit late. So on Saturday I made a mad dash to good old Pickapart, (it was raining on Friday) and luckily enough I managed to get what I needed and fitted to the Ka the night before.

Dannevirke is 2.5 hours away from home, and I have come to realise that pulling out the stereo and speakers was a slight mistake - it's a long way to go when you've just got road surface noise to listen to. It's not as if the Ford Ka has a racing car sound to enjoy. Also, different road surfaces make me paranoid and kept me wondering what was wrong with the car! Thankfully, it was just paranoia.

I arrived at Dannevirke and introduced myself to the organisers and other competitors who I presumed to be locals. They all seemed pretty keen to see the Ka in action. There were some pretty cool cars here, Don McLean brought his awesome WRX, Rex Wrangler had a WRX and not a Legacy, there was a Hillman Imp with a motorcycle engine in the rear and a pretty cool BMW. After some food, we had our drivers briefing and did a tiki tour of the course they had laid out for us. The course started along a driveway leading into a metal pit, weaving uphill,

around the back of the pit, back into the pit at the top, around some cones, down another hill, turning right at a t-junction for the second lap, then left after the second lap to the finish/start line.

It's a bloody good autocross track! After watching a few people from the start line, I hopped in the Ka for my first run. I took it easy on the first lap, then on the second I felt pretty confident, a little too confident. Coming back down the hill towards the finish, the road bends to the right, it was coming down a little fast and lost the back end coming over a slight hump, sending me into a spin and leaving me facing the wrong way, I quickly put it in reverse to the t-junction to turn around a over the finish line. Oops! Scary, but also funny! I was still grinning as I lined up for another go.

On my second go I was a lot more careful coming down that hill, but by my third go I was back to being a Hoon. I ended up having 7 or 8 goes at the course as they're where only 10 entries for the day and I am glad to say I wasn't the slowest, I bettered two other cars, one being a Subaru Impreza and another was a small Suzuki with a motorcycle engine in it, that was on Rally tyres too. I learnt a new word this weekend too, "knobbles" (gravel rally tyres). I didn't look at the times until after my 2nd to last run, my best time had been a 2.29:35 and I noticed Neil's best was a 2.29:30, so with that I decided on one last run. I thought I had done well, but I must have over driven it because I was a few seconds slower this time. I decided to call it a day at that and pack up and prepare for the 2.5 hour drive back to Wellington. Overall I was very happy with the Ka, it didn't come last, I put in some good times and with some knobbles I think those times will be a lot better.

I'm hoping that Dannevirke Car Club run these Autocrosses again next year, because I will be there. It is honestly well worth the trip, especially if your wanting some experience on gravel or just some seat time. This event wasn't too harsh on the car, but I might just get a sump guard fitted before my next gravel event, just in case.

Onto the next autocross, December 16th next to Masterton Drag Strip. See you there!

Mark Rutherford





# KIWI BRIGGS' CLASS KARTERS TICK RACING

## AT INDIANAPOLIS OFF BUCKET LIST

There were seven very happy Kiwi Briggs LO206 category karters amongst the 350 drivers celebrating at Indianapolis Motor Speedway on Sunday evening after a very successful second USAC-sanctioned Battle at the Brickyard kart race meeting over the July 07-08 weekend.

“It certainly was an amazing event,” group spokesperson, and current KartSport Wellington club President, Brent Melhop, said from his hotel in the city on Monday morning. “All seven of us qualified and got to finish

the Finals and bar Hadleigh (Coffey) who had a big crash and bruised his ribs, we all came through pretty much unscathed.”



Melhop ended up the top finisher of the seven-strong group of Kiwi Briggs LO206 class runners from Wellington who made the trip, finishing 10th in the one-make Margay K3 chassis/Briggs LO206 Ignite Masters class Final (out of 33 starters) and 11th in the main Ignite class Final (out of 44 starters).

Next best was Glen Dodd who finished 16th in the Ignite Masters (for drivers 35 years and over) Final after making up six places then came Shane Sayer (19th) and Mike Hanks (24th).

In the main Ignite class Final Shaun Croskery, Glen Dodd and Kyle Nelson finished line-astern in 25th, 26th and 27th places respectively with Shane Sayer 31st, Mike Hanks 34th and Hadleigh Coffey making it up to 35th after starting from the back row of the grid thanks to missing the Pre-Final because of his crash in qualifying.



Coffey and Croskery also entered the open-chassis Briggs Medium class (with 50 entries) where they finished the final 34th (Croskery) and 41st (Coffey)

The course the Battle at the Brickyard meeting ran this year was based on the ‘road course’ at the

venue originally created to run the United States Formula 1 GP and the World Championship round of the MotoGP motorcycle series, and included part of the start/finish straight of the Indianapolis 500 course.

As a special 'treat' on Friday evening the 350 karters across the 17 classes entered got to do a parade lap around the full 4.0km (2.5 mile) length of the famous oval.

While in Indianapolis the Kiwi karters also took the opportunity to do 'shop tours' of both the Andretti Motorsports and Chip Ganassi team race shops....where fellow Kiwi Scott Dixon turned up to say giddy and sign hats, books, posters and a Kiwi flag for the KartSport Wellington club house!



The seven Kiwis ran under the Wilford Motorsport banner with assistance from Auckland-based Carter's Tyre Service, and Wellington businesses ERS Karting, George Refrigeration and Air Conditioning, Business Knowledge and Typeface.

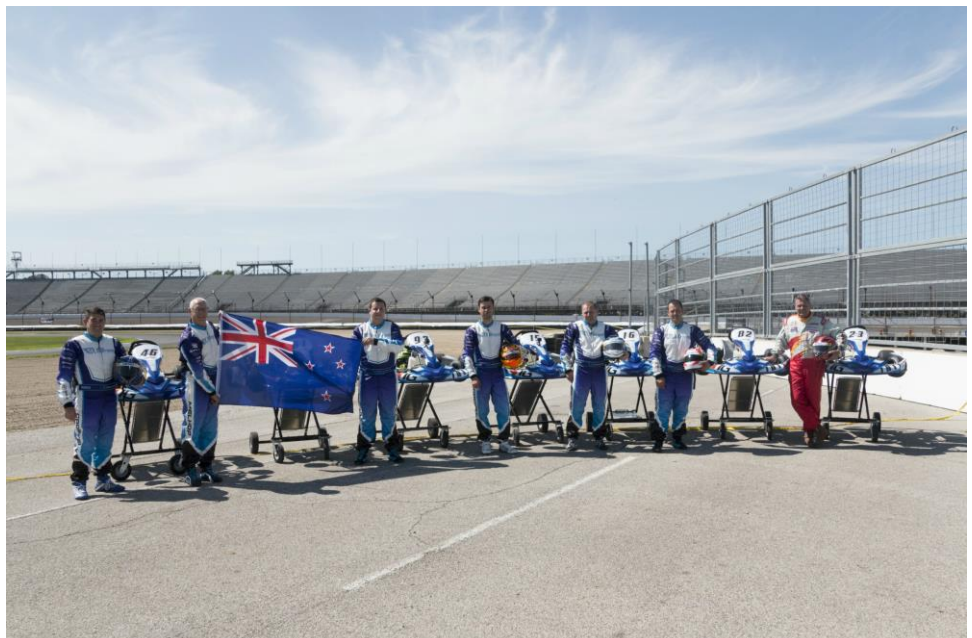
All seven ran the same livery on their Margay Ignite/Briggs LO2016 karts and the same Carter's Tyre Service helmet visor banner they do at home.

Once the novelty of being at the famous 'Brickyard' wore off Melhop says that reality of the situation soon became apparent.

"Friday, for instance, was a very busy day with three practice runs then qualifying at the end of the day. The sessions were short – just seven minutes – and with a 1 min 18 second lap it meant you only got five laps per session to learn a new kart on a hard tyre on a circuit no one had seen before."

The style of racing was also new to most of the Kiwis, who had only ever raced their own Briggs LO206 karts at home on purpose-built kart tracks, rather than converted motor racing circuits.

"It was actually more like the road racing we do at home at places like Manfeild and Taupo," says Melhop, "with drivers running together to get



good times, lots and lots of bump drafting and late dives. You had to draft if you wanted to get a good time.”

With plenty of experience road racing at home Melhop adapted quickest, qualifying fourth (out of 31) in the Ignite Masters class. Shane Sayer was next best with the 10th quickest time then came Glen Dodd (18th) and Mike Hanks (23rd).

It was Sayer who set the best time in the open Ignite category though (in doing so achieving one of his stated goals (to beat Brent Melhop!)), setting the 8th quickest time out of a field of 45. Melhop was next with the 10th quickest time followed by Hadleigh Coffey (14th), Shaun Croskery (16th), Glen Dodd (24th), Kyle Nelson (28th) and Mike Hanks (42nd).



Croskery and Coffey also entered the open-chassis Briggs Medium class but it was in that qualifying session that Hadleigh Coffey crashed heavily, breaking his kart’s seat, bruising his ribs and getting a trip to the track’s state-of-the-art medical centre for a check-up. Croskery qualified 26th (out of 54 starters), Coffey 39th despite the early end to his session.

The pressure on the Kiwi drivers told on Saturday when all – to a man – went backwards in their various Pre-Finals. As Melhop said; “The pressure and drafting all stepped up a notch. At home we run a 15 tooth front sprocket but at Indy we were running a 19 tooth and getting to over 100km/h. Amazing!”

Sunday was the big day with the general razzmatazz cranked up to fever pitch.

“Honestly, “ says Melhop, “it was just like we were at the real Indy 500. There was a guy playing the national anthem on an electric guitar, a four-person guard of honour, everyone singing the song ‘Back home in Indiana,’ and reciting the prayer for safety, then the famous words spoken by the President of the Indianapolis Motor Speedway, Doug Boles, ‘Drivers, start your engines!’”



Completing the picture the first class out got to do a lap of the Battle at the Brickyard track behind a 1969 Indy 500 Chevrolet Camaro convertible pace car.

Not surprisingly, thoughts amongst the Kiwi group have already turned to a return trip in 2019.

“Everyone up here made us so welcome,” says Melhop, “from the guys at USAC whose meeting it was, to Margay Karts who put the arrive-and-drive package together for us. So our thinking right now is, why not do it again next year with an even bigger group of Kiwi Briggs karters?”

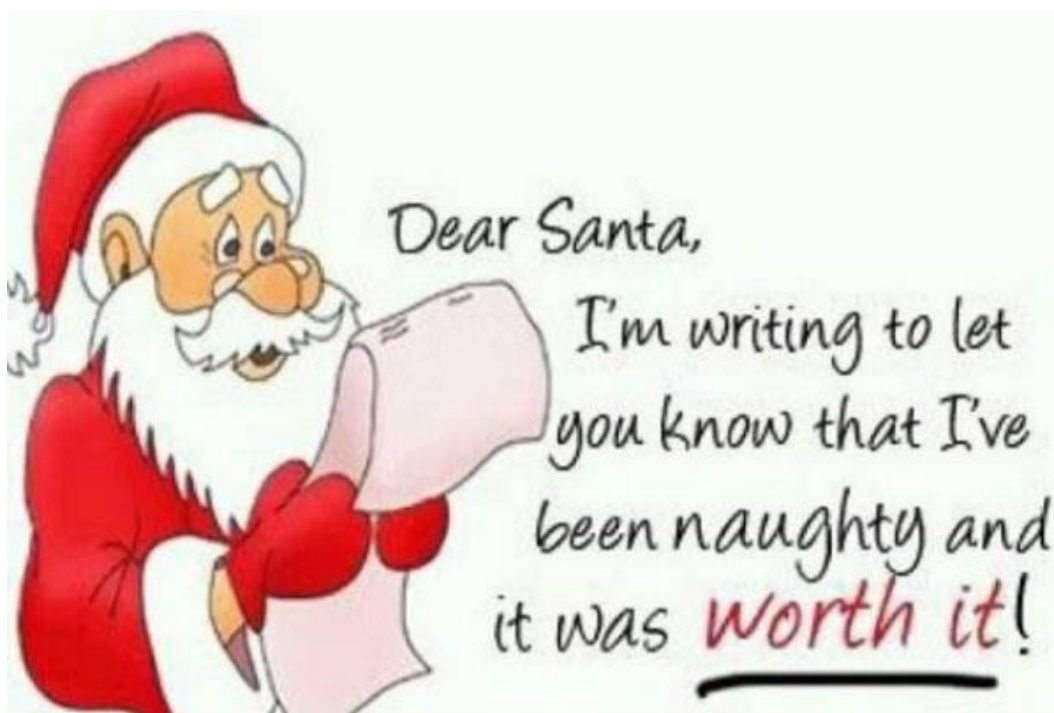
#### CAPTIONS

Keen Briggs L0206 class karters Brent Melhop (#61), Shane Sayer (#16), Mike Hanks (#23) and Kyle Nelson (#92) competing at the big Battle at the Brickyard kart race meeting at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway over the weekend. The seven-strong group of Kiwi Briggs L0206 kart racers ‘fly the flag’ before racing started. The classic Chev Camaro Pace Car, and a form finish for the Kiwi group on Friday evening’s ‘parade lap’ round the full Indianapolis oval. Photo credit: Fast Company/Olivia Melhop.

Prepared by FAST COMPANY on behalf of KartSport New Zealand. To find out more about KartSport in New Zealand contact Ross MacKay on 021 677 919 or via e-mail at [ross@fastcompany.co.nz](mailto:ross@fastcompany.co.nz)

Thanks to Mike Hanks who shared this article on their trip to Indianapolis.

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Leon's photos from the MG Classic at Manfield



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Rallies			
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