



Wheelspin

February 2024



www.hccc.org.nz

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Roll cage and authority card sign off

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Cover Image: by Leon Cast - Event: Shelley Bay

Committee Meetings

are held on the third Tuesday of each month

Location: 1841 Disraeli Street Johnsonville

7:30pm, everybody welcome

Club-night

first Tuesday of each month

This month 6th February

Location: 1841 Disraeli Street Johnsonville

7:30 pm

All members and friends welcome

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

The views and opinions expressed are not necessarily
those of the Club its members or the committee

You're welcome to share the contents of this magazine,
please remember to recognition of the source,
writers or photographer of the material.
Originals photographs are usually available upon request.

Magazine content deadline

The Deadline for ***WheelSpin*** articles is the
20th of the month

*If you'd like to submit a story but feel you need
some editorial assistance please reach out to the Editor
as we can help.*

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Farewell, and thanks for all the words...

After a huge stint as our, at times, reluctant editor (*looking to retire*), Len has now retired from the position.

Nobody can quite recall how many years ago Len took on the role, but we think it was a similar time to when there was a guy Noah, building some sort of large boat.

So after decade(s?) in the job of chasing content, Len is officially retiring from the Editorship. Which means the magazine will be under new management come the first bulletin of 2024..

We wish you well Len, and thank you for all the words.



Presidential Summer(?) time musings



As we're ramping back up again into allegedly better weather (okay, sure, there was a heavy rain warning yesterday ...), the weekends of eventing are

cranking up again.

I think I've got something car related every weekend from the start of November, until literally Christmas weekend. Which is a bit exhausting and expensive, but also rather fun.

Since last article, I've scrutineered and spectated Shelly Bay, had another gravel sprint, courtesy of Levin Car Club, driven up to watch the MG Classic meeting, and am about to (mid article write) head up to Manfeild for the dual clubsport day (grass Autocross and Sealed Backtrack autocross).

We've actually had a couple of fairly quiet events for numbers lately (economic crunch kicking in, or maybe just everyone broke their cars lately?).

Shelly Bay was about 20 or so entries (I don't have the results to hand), even after we convinced Chelles to enter in the Mirage, whilst she was on scrutineering duties! Which made it a day full of Mirages.

As well as the usual suspects, including the aforementioned Chelles, with two other Mirage buddies to fight it out with, Andrew in the AE82, a couple of Cross Cars, there was rather interestingly something shaped roughly like a BMW E30. However, on looking at it more closely, one then wondered why it was a "ute", also why it was left hand drive. Further close examination showed that actually, it was in no way a BMW.

From talking to the owner, the vehicle is actually a custom spaceframe, complete with entirely custom designed and constructed suspension. Powered by a supercharged LS at the front end, and running a transaxle at the rear. So the "alleged BMW" is actually Corvette power, in a custom package.

The end result was quite a decent amount of tyre smoke, and some rather good high precision driving.

Although he was suffering a brake balance issue, which resulted in an offroad excursion that didn't appear to be too damaging,



but did mean he withdrew for the day.

It did make for pretty decent photos up to that point though.

In the HCCC crew, Andrew was having fun in the Corolla, taking people out in

the silly seat, and was being chased by Lee Herd in the AE111 Corolla / Sprinter / Trueno / Levin (can you tell that I can't remember which model it

is?). Chelles had a pleasant day driving in the Mirage, and had no drama and plenty of smiles.

I got to have a skid myself at the Akatarawa / Woolshed Road gravel sprint, run by Levin (despite the venue being in Upper Hutt). It was an expanded version of the previous gravel sprint of two years ago, with it starting quite a bit earlier than the previous event, and adding a straight and a couple of corners after the previous finish line.

The downhill start certainly suited my very tall first gear, and it was a moderately brisk second gear run with a lot of very close little trees, before dropping down to the old start line at the bottom of the road, before making an endless second gear (in a Corolla anyway) crawl up the hill.

As the road levels out, it opens up a bit, to top end of second or bottom of third gear, on some tricky corners, punctuated by some properly decent hollows where puddles have been sitting on the road (not this weekend though, as it was dry), then into a straight, until making a sharp uphill right hander into a couple of corners before the finish line.

It was crazy slippery, and the back end of the Corolla was walking around all over the place, despite me running way better back tyres than front (free plug, Neil's wheels, for your rally tyres, but get in fast if you want Dunlops, as they aren't being brought in any more).

I had the most sideways moment in the Corolla that I've ever actually recovered from, which was a bit exciting, and possibly slightly inefficient to be travelling quite so sideways. Thankfully I was able to dial it back to straight again without departing the confines of the road. Then on my last run of the day, I bounced out of one of the dry puddles so hard that it kicked the car again toward the scenery, keeping lots of throttle on assisted though, and again I kept it out of the shrubbery. It was a bit of a challenging day, with both Cross Cars visiting the scenery (without lasting damage) on the exact same corner. Doc Watson only did one run in the GT4, with a misfire making him withdraw rather than risk engine damage (turned out later, it was dizzy cap and spark plugs letting him down), and Simon in the 4AGE KP Starlet also only putting in one run before parking up.



Unfortunately it was a bit of a crunchy HCCC day, as Jilly inverted the ex Brian Craig Corolla GT, on the tight uphill right at the end of the straight. The very heavy Corolla steering unfortunately meant that she had the wheel yanked out of her hand, and then a bank decided to get involved. Then Graham ran wide on his way up the hill, and collected a tree stump. So now the Pulsar is getting a new front crossmember and bumper, hopefully in time to run at Dorsets Road.

Neil Tapp was mumbling about having had some whoopsie moments, but finished the day with no apparent car damage (possibly emotional damage?). Hamish continues to come to grips with the BMW (running Altezza motorvation), putting in a solid second in class. Adam Fisher was having a great day in the Suzuki powered Starlet, now featuring upgraded suspension too, beating Dayle to first in Class A (and thumping everyone in Class B in the process).

Tim Campbell (Wairarapa) was putting in some storming times in the ex John Esler Ford Escort, which is running I am told, a highly modified Commodore V6 now. Which I guess for the true blue Ford fans, might be a cardinal sin, but sinful or not, he's putting down extremely quick times, and was only a couple of seconds behind the Cross Cars (which inevitably took out first and second overall).

Trundled up to Manfeild with Emma, to watch the Saturday races of the MG Classic. Deliberately chose the Saturday, knowing that there would only be half the races, as in previous years having watched the Sunday, the commentators would endlessly mention cars that we weren't seeing, as they broke down on Saturday. This definitely seemed to be the case, as the DNF rate was quite intense, with cars flooding into the pits during races, or being towed back after a race had finished.

The racing itself was pretty low key, with largely procession races, and not a lot of close dicing. Luckily the final race of the day made up for it, with a race for first place that was tooth and nail between three cars, all the way to the final corner of the final lap. It was one of those races with a little car versus a couple of big horsepower cars. There was an Escort outbraking a couple of V8's (I think a Camaro and a Mustang, if I recall correctly) and going inside or outside them on every corner, then getting blown into the weeds on the three long straights. In the end, an excellent tactical last corner saw the Escort blocked during the corner, and just being pipped to first place.

Some drama, with the Thomsen motors Mirage coming together with an E30 BMW into Dunlop, causing BMW rotation into the infield, and a Mirage pulling off with bumper and guard damage. It was shaping up as another good race, with the Mirage being able to comprehensively outbrake and outcorner the substantially more powerful BMW. However after the fender bender, that race was no more.

An Impala Nascar had what looked to be a small engine fire, resulting in a red flag, and a number of rescue vehicles arriving fast to the scene.

The level of car porn in the pits was phenomenal, as it always is at the MG meeting. Hopefully photos of various cars included elsewhere in the magazine.

Events reminder:

18 th February Autocross (Kim Naylor status has been requested).

Next eventing was the Manawatu Car Club motorkhana (grass) and backtrack

autocross. It was a bit of a confusing meeting for the people who hadn't read the regs, and assumed that it was a sealed motorkhana and a sealed autocross.

I intercepted a couple of people who were putting semi slicks on their cars, in anticipation of a sealed motorkhana, given that we were about to go out onto quite damp grass.

Having then intercepted some people, and guided them towards road tyres instead, I myself was then running on semi's on the GR Yaris, because that was what I had on the car, as I thought I'd get some heat cycling through the Goodride semi's, to hopefully harden them up a bit (so I drove to Manfeild on them). While the Goodrides were well suited to the lower power Altezza that I'd previously run them on, on the GR with quite a bit more boogie, and ability to turn, they're getting a really hard time and getting a bit melted pretty quick.

However, on the flip side, they're dirt cheap, so they might be good for a fun time rather than for a long time.

The motorkhana was quite fun, albeit hellaciously slippery. I ran the diff on the 70% back setting, to try to overcome the four wheel drive tendency to push the front on wet grass. I did manage to achieve second in class, and fourth overall, but was pipped to first in class by a Mazda SP20 from the Hawkes Bay. The GR did tend to sit on top of the grass, as she's running quite fat feet.

But at the front of the field (or to be precise, the infield of the backtrack), was a show of total dominance put on by Craig in the Mitsubishi Pistachio that we often see down at our Masterton motorkhana events. He absolutely thumped us all, putting in a time that was a good number of seconds clear of the second place car, which was another tiny car (Mira), with the SP20 and myself following in third and fourth places respectively.

There were a few familiar faces up there, with Stephen Heise running his Falcon. So yes, a Falcon running on super tight wet grass motorkhana courses... that said, he was an improbable 15 th out of 29 entries.

Pete Collins (PC) was running the gradually evolving Toyota Schitz (Vitz), up to 12 th in the motorkhana, the Loren brought up the tail end of the field having missed courses in the Sti, as an oil pressure sensor failed (causing the Link ECU to cut power to the motor).

The autocross started quite late, as because Manawatu do three runs at each motorkhana course, that means their events take 50% longer than the equivalent motorkhana here, where we only do



two runs at each course.

It was quite a different course this time, with super tight triple chicanes bringing the speed right down, and then using one of the "created roads" that the driving school has made in the infield. To make it even curlier (or maybe I mean spinnier?) they fed us down to a roundabout, and you did one and three quarters circuits of the roundabout in the anti-clockwise direction, before rejoining the circuit.

That was pretty tricky, as you turned from the circuit which was quite high grip, onto road that had a light coating of chip sitting on top of it. So I spent much of the intermediate road feathering the throttle to avoid a spin. Which must have been particularly exciting in the rear drive cars. My recollection of the event is a bit fuzzy now, as that was back in mid November, and I'm writing this down in mid January. But I think the weather was a bit variable, and we might have had a bit of rain toward the end of the event.

Turns out that the tight course really suited the GR, and I managed to storm home to a first overall in the autocross, which I think meant I got top overall points (though I'm not sure with this event if they do overall winner, or they run on class points, and I've not heard anything further).

Behind me was Loren in the STI with the oil pressure sensor replaced. The interesting result to me though, is PC about one second behind him in the Schitz. Which is probably 1/3 or 1/4 of the power of the Subaru. Definitely showing that PC was absolutely on fire that day, and was driving the pants off the little car. Also in a smaller bodied car, he will have been able to carry good speed in the chicanes.

Stephen brought the big Falcon home in 18th with Craig behind him in 22nd in the tiny Mitsubishi.

One of the next events (I had something car club related happening for five or six weekends in a row, so there's a bit of disclaimer there in case I have forgotten anything) was Dorsets Road gravel hillclimb, run by Wairarapa Car Club.

Great turnout again, with something close to 30 cars.

We were very much on weather watch, with extensive gloomy clouds lurking, and high winds all day.

I had a stinking cold, so was masked up (which meant I had to reassure a lot of people that I wasn't full of Covid), and feeling somewhat jaded. The council had done some extensive repairs to the road since the last running of the event, so there were effectively two serious new chicanes / corners to deal with. As such, they did a tiki tour up the road, and no practice. So the event was convoy, and then three runs. Adam and Jilly were sharing a drive of the KP Starlet, bringing that home second and third in class respectively, behind the always crazy Dayle in the Barina who once again put in a time that would also have won him Class B, not just Class A.

Ten of us were in the fight for Class B, with Clint and Yeti taking out first and second, followed by Cam down from the Hawkes Bay in another fast KP Starlet. I managed fourth in the Corolla, but was a fair way behind them.

Callum McKenzie did the big trip down from the Hawkes Bay, to give the MX5 a run, having chased down the bad earth that brought him to a halt during Daybreaker rally.

Class C saw only Brendon Norling in the Altezza, who was there purely to break the voodoo of Dorsets Road being the event where he destroyed his KE Corolla 8 years ago. The curse was successfully broken, and the newly caged Altezza is now ready for more and better adventures into the future. Class D saw Tim once again run away with it in the Holden powered Escort, despite his concerns over some clutch issues on the day. Brendon Cantwell was back again in the Evo powered KP Starlet, to come home in second in class. Graham having replaced the front crossmember and the sump guard on the Pulsar (refer previously mentioned Akatarawa stump removal efforts) was third in the Pulsar.

The Four wheel Jeepers class saw a result that I've not seen in a while, with a dead heat for first in class between Mark France in an Evo, and Simon Bicknell in an Impreza. Then in the Cross Cars, Warren lead home Josh, with just the two running in that category.

As it turned out, the weather was probably one of the most deciding factors on the day, as exactly in the gap between Group 1 and Group 2 doing their final runs for the day, it utterly pissed down. We're talking small rivers running down the road in the tyre tracks. So on average, the drivers who were in the first group improved their times by four seconds on their previous run, while the second group drivers were between two and seven seconds slower in that run than their previous run. So well done the weather gods, you really did scramble up the results for us!

Suffice to say, most of us got good and drowned while packing up cars in torrential downpours. I bailed out, and didn't even bother doing my last run.

Pumped up the tyres, and loaded up the car. Then drove just about the whole way home with air con running just to stop the car from fogging up! There's still a December Autocross to write about, but I'll stop at this point as your brains are probably already suffering enough from having had a double article out of me!

See you at the AGM (Waitangi Day) at 1841.

Cheers

Leon



*Shelly Bay Images by
Leon Cast*

*Autocross image by
Sarah Jaggs*



**Tuesday 6th Feb (Waitangi Day),
7pm at 1841 Bar in Johnsonville.**

Come along, have your say,
volunteer to do cool things,
and as always, eat steak!

See you all there!



Sunday February 18 - HCCC Autocross

Round 1 at Masterton for more information contact
Leon Cast or Jilly Fisher

Trentham Mechanical & Tyres Wallaceville Hillclimb

Sunday 25 February
Hutt Valley Motorsport Car Club
Enter via Motorsport NZ App

Alexandra Road Seal Hillclimb 2024

Sunday 17 March
Wellington Car Club
Enter via Motorsport NZ App

Hello, from your new Editor...

You might have noticed a wee change to the look of the Wheelspin this month. After many years of service to the role of editor, Len has stepped away and I (Chelles) have taken up the challenge of getting this little rag out to you each month.

This is your space to share so if you feel inspired to write something or have a few photos you'd like to show off let me know. I know a lot of you don't think to do this monthly, however, I am here to inspire you to contribute. What that really means is I'll be reaching out to members in the coming months and asking for your help. We have 90 members and if you're like me I don't know who you all are and what brought you to be part of the motorsport community. I'm interested to know so I thought I'd start a series that has a short bio on our members and a photo (or two) of your adventures.

So, to start it off I thought I'd share how I got into the crazy world of motorsport.

The year was 1996 and I was watching the De Havilland Drive Street Sprint in New Plymouth and I saw a woman racing and I thought to myself, 'I could do that!'. I said to my partner at the time "I want to give this a go", he looked at me a bit funny but agreed and from there I started my journey. It also started my obsession with 80's and 90's Japanese cars (*but that is another story!*)

We bought a written-off 1984 Toyota Levin, fixed it up, put a roll cage in it and I was off to my first event.

I was so amped to be racing, however, the reality hit me pretty hard when I was on the start line of the Tirimoana Road hill-climb realising how steep

the hill actually was! I was so nervous my legs were shaking and I stalled the car twice because I couldn't get the shakes under control. Times changed pretty quick from there as I did as many events as I could around Taranaki and, soon got known for my indifference for the brake pedal!

I recall the first time I went to a track. It was the old Taupō circuit, and I initially thought 'this can't be so hard, you're only going around the same few corners over and over again'. I now look back at that and think how wonderful it is to be



young and naive. Braking points, corner apex, ripple strips and my favourite, the kitty litter (which I saw on regular occasion in the early days).

Over the last 20+ years I've been so fortunate to compete at some great events throughout the country. I'd done all the typical ClubSport events and in 2004 I sold my Levin and bought my Mirage as I was looking for a new challenge. It was fresh out of Japan as an ex-series 1996 Mirage Cup Car (Google Mirage Cup, it was an epic racing series) and there started my next learning curve... how to drive a front wheel drive at pace!

This little car took me to some pretty amazing events. I'm most proud of when I was invited to an enduro race and learned what it was like to race for five hours with only two small breaks, phew, not for the faint of heart. This event taught me about consistency and that speed is not always the goal. I managed to finish, and in the top 10 which was a great achievement out of the 40 drivers entered.



I continued with hillclimbs and street sprints and few autocrosses, then branched out into organising track days for the online clubs like Toyspeed, SDU, Clubsub and MMC, ahhhh, the days of online forum car clubs. That pretty much started my next motorsport adventure of being a volunteer. I became a Clerk of Course and a little while later a scrutineer. Its been rewarding and a great learning journey being on that side of the events.

I have found being a woman in motorsport a challenge at times over the years, as you can imagine, not all my fellow competitors were so keen to have a woman in the mix. In the 90's and 2000's I had to fight hard for my place at events and to be taken seriously. Not to mention getting organisers to realise that Chelles is not Charlie and yes, women can drive race cars too. As many know, I don't shy away from a spicy conversation, so have always been ready to battle my side when people have been a little less than charitable. However, putting all that aside, I've been fortunate to meet some great people along the way that I now call friends and have been encouraged to go and do properly cool things.

My Mirage and I have been racing together for 20 years this year, it's been a champion journey so far, and we look forward to seeing you all out there.

Chelles.

My First Car, and then...

by Wayne Gai

My first car was a 1948 Morris Series 'E'. The picture below shows a 1949 model, and it is certainly a lot more pretty than the one I owned. I ultimately painted it a maroon (dark red) with black guards, but when I bought it for sod all money (10 pounds – yes before decimal currency) it looked like a clown car, with the then brand new “morglo” paint which was a matt finish but so soft that it basically washed off over time.

The slightly ‘newer’ version of this paint is called ‘dayglo’. The colour scheme was lime green body, with red guards and yellow wheels and looked absolutely hideous, but it was very cheap. All of 918cc of side valve motor, but it had a 4 speed gearbox with syncromesh on 2, 3, and 4.

My father hated it and demanded that I get rid of it, but softened a bit and even helped me to hand paint it in its new and much more acceptable colours. It actually looked pretty good and I learnt about painting with warm enamel paint from a ‘double boiler system’ over a primus

to make the paint flow so there were very few brush strokes showing. The photos below are representatives as I don't have photos of either vehicle as they went the way of much other stuff when I moved away from home in Whangarei to go to university.



After a friend decided that he would like to buy the series E, I bought an ex laundry van on tender for 10 pounds. This next vehicle was a 1953 Bradford Van, which had a 1005cc flat twin engine and produced an amazing 19kW of power!! In a step backwards, this one had a 3 speed gearbox and I remember the steering

being absolutely bloody awful as it developed a “shimmy” in the front end at about 25mph and if you were really brave and could ‘power’ through the experience of the front end of the vehicle shaking all over the place, it vanished at just over 30 mph. The attraction of the van was that it could take dive tanks and all kinds of other diving gear in the back and was great at negotiating tracks to various beaches in Northland. After replacing the king pins in the front suspension and the bushings in the front leaf springs, I finally tried setting up the front end with ‘toe out’ and as I recall it, quite a lot of it too. Hey presto!, the shimmy disappeared and the van became a relative pleasure to drive. This advice came from a car club member who was a mechanic and had a shop Bradford Van. I did my first car club organised motor-sport event (a gymkhana – now called motorkhana) in the van and I was hooked, as it was so much fun trying to get the van to turn quickly without tipping over. There were one or two near misses with that! I even did a grass track race in it amongst a heap of other vehicles of all types. I remember coming well last, but what a huge amount of fun!



Membership Application & Renewal

Post completed form to: Harbour Capital Car Club, C/o 13 Gray Street,
Pukerua Bay 5026, New Zealand

First name: _____ Surname: _____

Other family members names:

Residential address: _____

Postal address (if differs): _____

Phone number: HM _____ Cell: _____

Email: _____

Occupation: _____

Make and Model of car: _____

How did you find out about us: _____

Events I'd like to compete in

	Not Many	Some	Lots
Speed Event			
Rallies			
Motorkhana			
Car Trials			
Social Events			

I'd like to volunteer: Speed \ Rallies \ Motorkhana \ Car Trials \ Social Events (please circle)

Annual subscriptions paid to: Harbour Capital Car Club

Per year: Single membership \$45.00 - Student \$35.00 - Family \$55 for a couple, add \$10 per additional person.

Bank details: BNZ 02-0500-0351392-02

Reference: your name