

OriEnt Express



*The official newsletter of the Datsun Z Club Inc.
P.O.Box 24-176, Royal Oak, Auckland, N.Z.*

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The views expressed in the "Orient Express" are those of the contributors, and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Datsun Z Club Inc., unless stated as a point of policy. The Datsun Z Club Inc. accepts no responsibility for the information or advice given in the "Orient Express" or by club officials or committee. Readers should exercise their own judgement when considering technical matters and modifications affecting their vehicles. It is recommended therefore that if in doubt on any technical matter, owners should consult the Official workshop manual for their particular model of car.

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On a Roll

Bugger.

So, I err, have to apologise. As you may have noticed this issue is just a tad (10 months) late. My bad. Please feel free to send hate mail to this address: president@porscheclub.co.nz. It's not my address, but i'm sure it goes to someone.

On the upside, the lateness is not an indicator of the vitality of the club. To the contrary, one of the excuses I've been using (and using and using) is that there are so many events to attend, who can find time to put a magazine together?!



We've just done the Galaxy of cars, the Intermarque Concourse and Taupo 2008 in 3 weekends straight which takes us into autumn and a bit of a breather from the hectic pace of summer. DON'T PANIC! There are plenty more events throughout the year, but we're not so motivated by the good weather. And wow what great weather we've had.

I've covered what I can of the 2007 events, although I must admit it would be great if more participants put pen to paper after an event. It's great to share different viewpoints with club members and really helps to dredge back those memories!

On the vehicular front, I'm pretty sure I've told everyone under the sun already (I'm so proud of myself) that I've finished the front brake upgrade on my 260 2+2. What a difference it made at Taupo, being able to go hard under brakes at the end of the straight over and over again, knowing every time that they would be there to stop me making a fool of myself. Look for my memoirs later in this issue.

Well that's enough rambling, lets get on with catching up on 2007 (and even some of 2008!)

Pest.

Coming events

At the time of publishing, 2008 events have been planned but the dates are as yet unfinalised. The following are those that have been decided: For full event details please visit the website or contact a committee member.

Hotel du Vin overnight

When: Saturday 22 March 2008

Where: Hotel du Vin

The Z Club has organised discount rates for accommodation & activities at Hotel du Vin, for Saturday 22 March 2008. It promises to be a great get-away. PLEASE CONTACT THE HOTEL DIRECTLY (Ph: 09-233-6314) & QUOTE "Z CLUB" to secure your Saturday night booking. (\$240 per couple/per room)

For full details please see www.zclub.org.nz or contact Mike on michael.moyes@chapmantripp.com

Karaka Vintage Day

When: Sunday 30th March 2008 from 8am

Where: Karaka Sports Grounds, corner Linwood & Blackbridge Roads, Karaka

This is a bi-annual event that is gaining popularity each year.

On display will be: Stationary engines, Tractors, Implements, Vintage Cars, Trucks, Classic Cars, Motorcycles, Tools, Military Vehicles etc.

We will have a club display there. Come along and enjoy the day with us.

Z Club ClubNite

When: 7:30pm Thursday 03 April 2008

Where: South Auckland Car Club clubrooms.

Agenda to be decided.

This is the monthly club gathering. Enjoy the company of your fellow club members.

If you like, you can join in the committee meeting beforehand, beginning at 7pm.

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When: 7:30pm Thursday 01 May 2008

Where: South Auckland Car Club clubrooms.

Agenda to be decided.

This is the monthly club gathering. Enjoy the company of your fellow club members.

If you like, you can join in the committee meeting beforehand, beginning at 7pm.

DC3 Flight + Pioneer Aero Restoration visit

When: 4th May 2008

Where: Ardmore airodrome

Full details yet to be decided, keep an eye on the website for updates.



Welcome New Members

The club would like to extend a warm welcome to the following new members:

<i>Name:</i>	<i>Area:</i>	<i>Year:</i>	<i>Model:</i>	<i>Colour:</i>
Johnathon Bennett	Auckland	1972	240z	
Sunny Katira			350z	Red
Gregory Manktelow			300zx (1 st gen)	Red
Don Johnstone			300zx	Silver
Kevin Exelby		1970	240z	White
Matthew Lemane	Tauranga		300zx	
David Wilson	Hamilton		280z	
Chris Jackson	Auckland		300zx	
Ron Findlay			260z	
Ngarita Hunter			350z	Red
Laurence Bertram			260z	White
Wai-yan Wai	Auckland		350z	Black

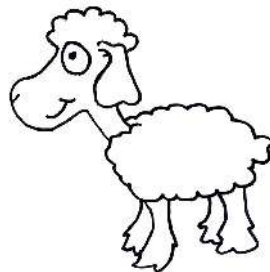
Baaaa - Cruise to Sheep World

We all bravely retreat inside away from the inclement weather whilst the rest of the crew arrives at the Northern motorway BP Quickstop just past Albany.

The last Zed arrives and as we set off on our convoy up to Sheep World the sun makes a striking appearance and the rain clouds disappear.

Arriving at Sheep World they weren't as organised as hoped, so we took the opportunity to watch and a few partake in the humorously entertaining Sheep Show for free. After the Sheep Show still at a loose end waiting for the Clay Bird Instructor to arrive, so we overran the cafe on site to appease our hunger pains whilst we waited.

The Clay Bird shooting instructor duly makes his appearance, so off up the paddocks we wander through the menagerie of sheep, cows, farm dogs, lama's, a



bleating goat trying to strangle it's self on the fence, nosey donkey's, one might have thought we were on a farm.

Finally we have our opportunity after tuition and safety gear handed out from our instructor to step up and have a go at the skeet's. Steve W steps up for the first shots. Then Alan and we see why those rumored sacrificial pigeons on the roof played their part in the impressive 7/10 shots. Chris, Ren and Wai –Yan also demonstrating natural talent, Steve C very close behind and Tina's Laserstrike skills easily transferring to Skeet's. Many valiant attempts, but no one could quite beat Alan's score.

Might the delayed start or the razzing as we had a go at the fluorescent skeet's but we ran out of time for a cruising out to Goat Island.

Out of 10 shots as follows:

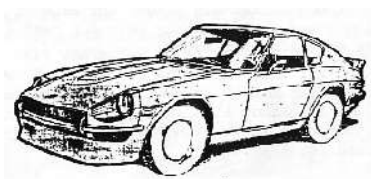
Bigger target next time please

Ngarita	0
Bev	0
Imogen	0
Heath	0

Woohoo hit some!

Steve W 2

Dave	1
Matthew	1
Richie	1
Dawn	1
Sharon	1
Kelvin	2
Stuart	1



Budding Amateurs

Steve C	3
Tina	3

Crash hot shots for 1st timers

Chris	4
Ren	4
Wai Yan	5

Beat my 7/10 shots

Allan	7
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Grass Stains

It was with much trepidation I went to my first grasskhana. Being fairly new to the club I was unsure of what to expect. I had heard about big boys and big toys and lots of smiles so I knew there had to be a good fun factor. Unfortunately I had just had the motor rebuilt in my Z and pushing it hard would have been a bad thing to do. It was good to have the BMW and Mini clubs along to add to the array of very nice cars.

Our thanks go to Keith for allowing us the use of his real estate. I would imagine that it will take some time for the ground to recover and even a bit of repair to fix some of the ruts, just in time for next year hopefully if we're allowed back after this and previous years of Zed paddock destruction. A great sacrifice, thanks Keith. Great to see a good number of on lookers, as the road was above the paddock and the view was excellent.



The day proved to live up to expectations. Three courses were laid out, continuing circles, a clover leaf. It was good to see the queues as the cars waited for the next turn. Although the last course had us all looking and hoping hard that we would actually remember it. Bit of a labyrinth. A certain yellow 300zx enjoying the slides. All courses proving excellent for testing the driving skills. Or not.

It looked to me that the Mini's were doing the best times, but the fun factor certainly went to the rear wheel drives, with some excellent controlled slides. And some, not so controlled slides. It was certainly an event where power doesn't win the day.

We had a wide spectrum of cars with the odd BMW Shnitzer down to the family sedans, and not to forget the slow ute. But with no exceptions the water blasters would have been out at home extracting the best part of Keith's field.

Again thanks Keith for allowing us to destroy your paddock and our thanks to those in the Z Club who put effort into the organising the day Kelvin, Imogen, Mike, Murray and Chris who put the day together. It was a very enjoyable day. And let's not forget the kings on barbeque and Gary and Catherine from the Mini club diligently attending to the timing all day in the hot sun.

Bernie Kant

Results from the day as follows

Z Cars

1st Ken 240z

2nd Harry 350z

3rd Roly 350z

Minis

1st Paul Mini 1000

2nd Andrew Mini Cooper 1275

3rd Lee Mini Mayfair 1275

BMW

1st Jack BMW 328i

2nd Keith BMW M5

3rd Paul BMW 320i

Other Makes

1st Murray Toyota Corona

2nd Steve Alfa Romeo 1750

3rd Dawn Nissan Skyline



Crikey, what a weekend!

Friday at 1pm a few of us met at BP Drury to head off on our expedition to Napier.

Brian and Sheryl with Ben (their Bichon Frise) in his dog box in the back, boy was their 240 well packed.

Kelvin in his 280.... Now there's a change... good ole Black Betty.

Bernie and Jeanette with son Lynden folded carefully into the back of their 260 for most of the trip.

Me and my trusty sidekick Steve in the best car in the world (Skyline GTV)... I love my car... hehe

After a quick coffee we headed off to our first pit stop, Matamata. Time for a wee leg stretch and a sniff in the autumn leaves by the public toilets, for Ben that is...



Our intrepid travellers

Next stop Taupo. I love Taupo its one of my fave places, views across the lake and driving through the steam on the way in, so cool! McD's this time for a hot choc and a bite to eat. Ben is so well behaved, not so sure about that Brian tho, he is such a handful...lol,

poor Sheryl.

Off again before it got too dark along the Napier/Taupo road, man that's the first time I've been on that road, it was awesome, traffic was fairly light and they have heaps of passing lanes, with the moon nearly full it was light enough to drive at a reasonable pace. Most of the traffic was leaving Napier, silly sods!

We arrived at the Anchorage Motor Lodge and were blown away by the size of the apartment we were given, 3 bedrooms, two bathrooms, open plan living dining and kitchen with 2 lounge suites and even a 2nd tv in my room, on the top floor with views across the harbour, very cool place to stay if you go to Napier, and not that expensive. Brian and Sheryl and Ben buggered off to stay with their son Grant who just recently moved to Napier from Hamilton, good move I say...

There were plenty of restaurants just a short walk along the waterfront and the Thirsty Whale turned out to be the best meal of the whole weekend, great steak!

We woke up on Saturday morning to a stunningly clear day and Kelvin moved us along to his favourite place for brekkie, Nosh. Not sure if it is actually the food or the waitresses he is most fond of, although the food was great! Mmm hot chocolate...



Totally replete we headed off to the info centre where we met up with Trevor and Diane and their wee boy from Tauranga and their 300zx.

Now Napier as you will all know is the Art Deco capital of NZ with 140 buildings remaining from the 164 erected between 1920 – 1940.

We paid \$10 for a 100 min Art Deco Tour and off we went with our tiny wee Dutch tour guide to learn about zig zags, ziggurats and speed lines (I know, I know what on earth are ya talking about...

well its just some fancy names for the geometric patterns on the buildings). There are some really amazing buildings in Napier. We saw a very small proportion in the hour or so that we wandered the streets, but very interesting to learn about the history of the area, before and after the big ole earthquake that devastated the area in 1931.

Then we stuffed ourselves into the cars and zoomed off to find Te Mata Peak a really big hill which gave us a spectacular view of the whole area. Crispy brown grass as far as the eye could see, as they haven't had a lot of rain in Napier, except for the bright green patches where the farmers have been irrigating. And necessary photo stop at the top for the zeds.

Then back into the cars to follow Grant in his MX5 supercharged wonder... he took us to the end of the earth we thought, but found a really neat place for lunch not far from the Gannet colony. Which unfortunately we couldn't go to see as they all migrated to warmer climes at this time of year.

After lunch Sheryl, Jeanette and myself decided we didn't wanna visit the dumb ole car museum so we ambushed Kelvin's 280 and trundled back to town for some shopping... yay, while the rest of them peered at dusty old relics, guess they felt right at home. hehe

A cunning plan was hatched by the blokes to send the girls off shopping so we could enjoy the British Car Museum in piece and quiet. The museum has a collection of over 300 British cars from the mid 1930s to mid 80s with the bulk being Morris Minors, Austin's, Vauxall's , Jags and the like. Also car memorabilia from the 1920's to the current date. It's great to see all these treasures being housed under cover had saved for future generations. If you are into this sort of thing it is well worth the effort in calling in for a look.

Casanova... um Brian found himself the center of much attention from the ladies of Napier and wee Ben is now infamous, I think he will be appearing as a centerfold with the Bridal party that was staggering out of a stretch Hummer in the middle of town. So guys if you are single and want to meet lotsa girls, get a wee dog like Ben they will ooh and aah all over you.

Dinner again on Saturday night we just tottered along the road after a few drinks in our room, those boys sure do pour em strong, at least it kept us warm while we found a place to eat. Damn rugby

was on and we had to hog tie Sheryl to get her away from the big screen in the bar lol, she's a fighter that one....

Up again on Sunday, another gorgeous day! Off to Nosh again then back to motel to be picked up by tour bus for our big Winery dates. Our bus driver was a hoot and our first port of call was Brookfields where the owner took us through the tasting of some of their wines, she was so good it was hard for the other vineyards to live up to her presentation. Best wine of the day was the Brookfields Malbec that went so well with Chocolate, I could have bought the whole lot, who would've thunk it...



So... 9.30 in the morning, wine tasting after a night on the vodka, I was very slow to start and ended up giving most of my tastings throughout the whole day to Steve and Kelvin. We all thoroughly enjoyed ourselves but by 5.30 when they dropped us off we were ready for a rest.

Grief, more drinks before dinner.... just lucky there were so many restaurants to choose from that were within stumbling distance of the motel...

Monday morning dawned, another clear sky and beautiful day Do they get sick of this weather??? Note to self must move to Napier... Off we grumbled for brekkie again.

Then back to pack the cars for the trip home, via Taupo for more food, well it's rude not to eat at lunchtime... and a pit stop in Putaruru. We made good time back to Auckland, considering it was a long weekend the traffic into Auckland wasn't too bad.

All in all, a great weekend.

Braking News 2

Brians article in the last Orient Express was so inspiring (and my brakes at Taupo 2007 were so miserable) that I decided to undertake his suggested upgrade myself. It was a spectacular success as proven by my considerably more enjoyable time at Taupo 2008.

Rather than just rehash what Brian said though, I thought I'd present a more technical description of the challenges involved aimed at those, like me, who are only moderately technically inclined.

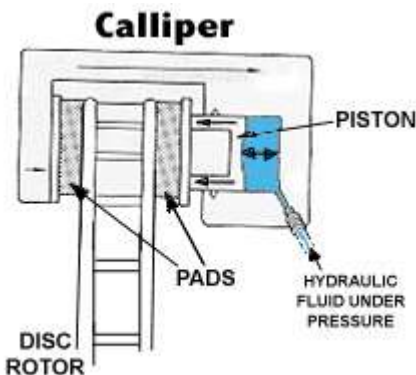
Let me start by saying, if you take your time it's not actually that difficult or expensive. All up, counting callipers, pads, fluids, disks and machining I spent somewhere in the region of \$500. That's pretty cheap considering the incredible difference it's made to the car.

First up there are the callipers themselves. I used the same Toyota Hilux 4 pot callipers that Brian used. I got them from Mike-o-pedia (Thanks Mike!) but you should be able to find them at any Toyota parts place or Pick-a-part.

Callipers are really a fairly simple mechanism, they're just 1 or more pistons in a sealed housing. By depressing the brake pedal you transfer pressure through the brake fluid to those pistons, squeezing the brake pads onto the disk, slowing the wheels rotation through friction.

The diagram shows a single piston or "pot", the Hilux callipers have 4 pots, 2 on either side of the disk pressing against each other. The new Porsche GT front calliper has 6 pistons!

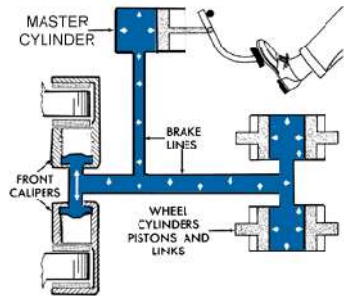
The best thing about the Hilux callipers is that the mounting holes are exactly the right size and position, putting the calliper right over the factory disks and each pistons fluid volume is almost exactly half that



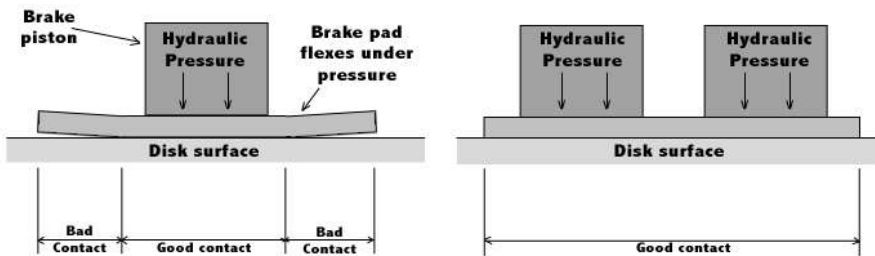
of the original Z 2 pots. Why half? Because we have twice as many pistons!

The brake master cylinder is the end of the hydraulic system that attaches to your brake pedal. It's a piston much like in the calliper but it works in reverse. We apply pressure to the piston via our foot on the pedal and it transfers that force into brake fluid pressure. This fluid is carried via metal and rubber pipes to your brakes.

As you might imagine, there is a direct relationship between the volume of your master cylinder and the volume of your brake pistons. If you can keep this relationship as similar as possible to the original factory setup, you won't change how much your pedal moves when you apply the brake and you'll keep the "balance" between the front and rear brakes the same too.



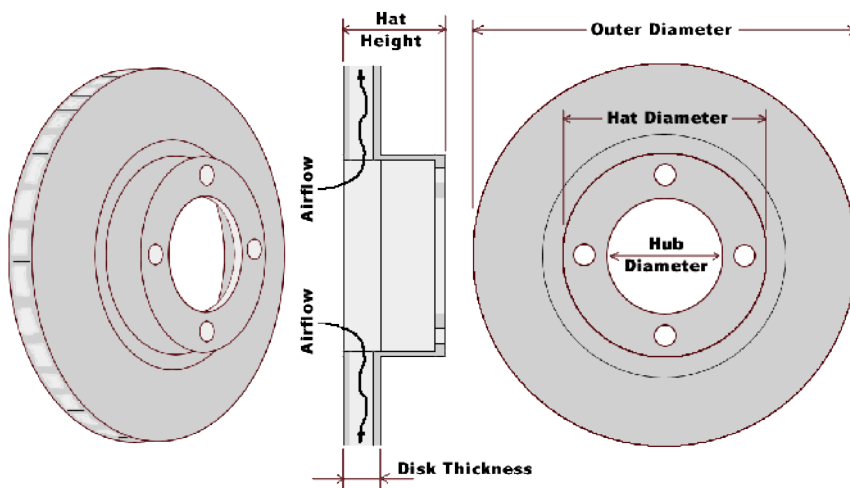
At this point you might be asking yourself why go through all this effort just for some extra pistons?! Why are 4 better than 2? Well, it's all about increasing the contact surface area between the pad and the disk and applying even pressure over the whole brake pad. More pistons means bigger disks and stronger braking.



Right, on to the disks. Our beloved old 240s and 260s came with solid front disk brakes. I'm sure this was revolutionary at the time, but by today's standards they're pretty sad. The problem is that there's not enough surface area to dissipate the heat generated during prolonged

or excessive braking (like on a track, or say, out the back of Whitford *cough*). Modern brakes overcome this problem by splitting the disk in half and letting air constantly flow through the gap in the middle, even when the brakes are being applied. Further improvements can be made by “slotting”, “dimpling” or “cross drilling” the disk surface, but I won't go into that here.

The biggest difference from our “upgrade” perspective is the thickness of the “brim” of the disk. On a solid disk this is 8-10mm. On a vented disk it's at least 18mm because of the cooling space in the middle. This means we can't simply put new disks inside our old callipers, there simply isn't space. But since we've got shiny modern ones, we have the choice. With the Hilux units you could leave your old disks as-is, but you will need to have a spacer made up to go between the piston head and the pad, to make up the gap to the disk. They're intended for a 20mm disk, which means you'll have 10mm to fill!



If you're committed to going the whole hog, this is where you measure up the thickness, hat-height and outer diameter (OD) your new disks will need to be. Then, if you're like me, you go to your nearest BnT and stand there for about 3 hours, trolling through their suppliers catalogues trying to find a set that are the right dimensions

and available in NZ. It turns out that that second thing is the tricky part.

I ended up with BMW Mini (the new one) front rotors. Exactly the right OD. Almost exactly the right hat height and just slightly thicker than I wanted (22m, about 0.5mm within my maximum!) As the hub diameter was too small and the stud pattern was slightly wrong, I had to have those things machined to fit, but that was no big deal thanks to Alan and Alert Engineering. The centre was bored out to fit my hubs (~80mm) and new stud holes were drilled at 45° to the old ones.

Then there was the matter of fitting them. As the hat height wasn't exactly right I had to use a washer approx. 1.5mm thick to move the calliper back to where it was centred on the disk. Luckily I found exactly the washer I needed at Bunnings Warehouse. I had already cleaned the callipers and put new seals in (a very easy, cheap task) and had new heavy duty pads ready, also from BnT.

Then on to final assembly. Bolt the disks to the hubs, remount the hubs (I took the opportunity to put in new wheel bearings too) and bolt up the callipers with the help of those washers. The only complication at this stage was the steel brake line sections from the suspension strut to the calliper, but luckily the new hole was close enough to where the old one was and we (thanks Murray!) were able to wrestle it into place without too much difficulty.

Finally bleed some new fluid into the callipers and take it for a test drive! The improvement is very noticeable. You still get a little softening of the pedal when the disks heat up but it takes much longer to experience any fade and the recovery time is significantly reduced.

All in all this was an inexpensive upgrade, and although I managed to stretch it out over several months, it could be done in a couple of days with the right motivation. One final note is that modifications to brake assemblies legally require a low volume vehicle certification so you may wish to incorporate this with other modifications and get them certified all at once.

Pest.

AuguZt Mystery Trial

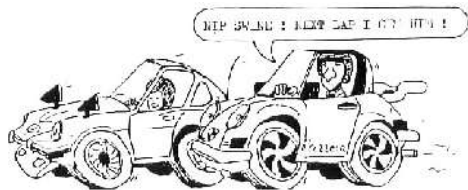
The weather certainly decided not to play ball for the beginning of the trial at the big Golden Arches in Manukau. Thunder, lightening, pouring rain, the whole deal, inclement being an understatement, but still 19 troopers turned out to participate. 9 cars, but only 3 Zeds, as Bruce quite rightly pointed out.

Thank goodness for the trees strategically above where we'd parked waiting for the crew to arrive. Honestly you had to be there, to see the silly side of it, ducking in and out of cover with borrowed umbrellas trying to distribute the instructions etc without getting drenched and turning the instructions into paper mache.

Having set some of the crew off, the last few drive over to the ute to get their instructions. Now Allan all I'm going to say is I'm glad you were driving your 4 x 4, because the wing mirrors, well they'd have been kissing otherwise. Then a very graceful synchronised fractional lowering of windows, attempting to pass across instructions into the seemingly massive distance of 30cms of heavy precipitation.

As the teams were set off, one has to wonder if the drive through staff at McDonald's figured out the sudden fascination after numerous requests as to the price of a Big Mac at 10am in the morning.

The last few depart, and being the evil trial masters we are, we head off to a good vantage point to put those voyeuristic tendencies to work, watching the teams go by and to see if the teams had figured out the clues or if the clues need to be more cryptically bizarre next time. Have to love those



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random boring brown letter boxes, now come on admit it, you know you were all looking for some gorgeous exotic letterboxes and then there were the bolts heads on the wharf. What were we thinking with those clues, peculiar, oddball, yeah bring it on!!

The teams arrive at the end point, The Clevedon Café and we packed the place out in our normal fashion.

Well done to John & Roslyn 1st, Dave/Janice & Dale/Judy 2nd equal. And a special mention goes to Bruce's son Izaak, a whole 8 years old, and definitely a mini Targa Rally Navigator in waiting.

Special thanks to the Mini Club's Gary and Catherine for coming along to participate.

Thank you to all those that attended, makes it all worthwhile when so much effort is put into organising an event.

Cheers
Bronzee

Feathers and Fish Hooks

Reprinted from the Mini club magazine

The annual Mini Club Economy Run was held on December 9th, starting at 1pm from the Motorway Service Station at Drury. We were treated to the briefest of briefings from Gary who basically said “Welcome to the Economy Run. Please line up over here and you’ll be set off individually.” “What???? Is that it????” Every time one of the Zed Club cars started up, I wished that my Mini and I were in their group as it sounded like a litre of fuel used just to turn the motor over, let alone a genteel cruise in the country.

The normal 60 sec interval between cars seemed to be taking forever, but it was a chance to have a chat with others while the early birds received instructions on the start line. It was apparent that tactics were being employed already so as not to sit too long in the queue, with its stop/start nature, using the precious liquid gold unnecessarily. Little did I know what was waiting for us – I thought I saw some ruffled feathers flying from some cars on the start line, but took no notice. I had taken the bait!

There were a few, myself included, who were doing the run solo, my usual navigator having decided that her (oops his/her) time would be better spent shopping! What a good call this would turn out to be, although it was not appreciated at this time.

Eventually, my turn came to line up for the start. Gary opens the door, hands me some sheets and says something about being two sheets of questions with no clues as to what / where they are except that they are in order. I hardly heard him after “two sheets” as sheet 1 looked had about 100 questions on it (about 15 really!) and appeared to be very obscure.

This would not be a genteel cruise in the country.

Before I had a chance to come to terms with these, more sheets are handed over with the course instructions. Gone are the usual well written step-by-step instructions. In their place are about 40 ‘tulip’ diagrams that showed the direction to take at intersections.

This is going to be a quick and genteel cruise in the country!

Suddenly it dawned on me that there would be more than 40 corners and

that these were only the ‘important’ ones.

Maybe not so quick and genteel after all.

With my mind starting to come to grips with the questions and instructions, ‘He who must not be named’ hands over another sheet. With the voice of a choirboy Gary calmly states that this is also to be a treasure hunt and these are the items you need to collect. OMG! Has this man no mercy? It’s apparent that JK Rowling has modelled Voldemort on Gary. Feathers!! Fish Hooks!! I bet there’s a horse’s head on the list somewhere! I wish I had a Nimbus 2000 so I could bash Gary around the ears for this.

I wanted a genteel cruise in the country.

Not only have we been taken hook, line and sinker, but at the moment it feels like the rod, reel and boat as well. Raw wool – do we need to start sheep rustling now? For the first time in my life, I wish I was Australian because then, there would be plenty of raw wool in the backseat of my car! Shell? We aren’t going anywhere near the coast. Maybe we will pass a Shell Garage and I can sneak in get a corporate logo. I wouldn’t dream of filling the car as well while I was there, would I... Queen of Hearts? Maybe there is a stray picture of the late Princess Diana in one of the Sunday papers. She was known as the Queen of Hearts. Should I take the “We should be a republic, not a monarchy” view and hand in a picture of Helen Clark. She could be our Queen of Hearts. No wait, she’d be our King of Hearts. Cork from wine bottle... This will be a problem since I’m never drinking again after that last time. Oh well, if I have to make a sacrifice, better make it a 2002 Cabernet! Looking down the remainder of the list, I thought about the chance I had to go and stick pins in my eyes instead of doing this run. I am *very* glad that we do not have to hand in a pin! Hang on a minute lads..... that fish hook would do the job just as well.

Where’s my genteel cruise in the country?

Had Darth Vader finished his tormenting? Not by a long way. Whilst waiting in line for the start, I noticed lot of water running down the road and mentioned this to Catherine along with the hope that it would not lead to problems for someone later. With that, I made sure I still had the compulsory 3 litre bottle of water in the car that I always carry in case I get lost in the desert. Then the reason for the water on the road becomes crystal clear. Lord Sauron suddenly produces a plastic cup of water and boldly

states “Hand this in at the end with the same amount of water in it.” Stunned, I look and immediately realize what Frodo felt like when agreeing to destroy the Ring by ‘throwing it into the Fires of Mt Doom’. I know where someone should throw Dr Evil! Then with a cheery OK, Michael Corleone moves on to his next ‘customer’.

Time for the genteel cruise in the country!

After looking at all the sheets and throwing the water out the window – he didn’t say it had to be the same water – off I go. A famous TV star once sang “It’s not easy being green” and it certainly wasn’t easy keeping up with the directions and questions, whilst looking for feathers and fishhooks. However, this made me curb the natural instincts when driving the GT and slow down. It dawned on me that this was actually improving the fuel economy of the drive and this was the aim of this run. Things hadn’t worked out too bad although I did forget all about the feathers and fishhooks for the first half of the run. In the back blocks of Bombay there were several paddocks of sheep, and Pinnacle Hill Road was just like a treasure hunt supermarket – raw wool on the fences, pine cones by the hundred, gorse was plentiful although not many flowers. Got a few pricks getting that – did they remind me of anybody? Discarded wine bottle - I hate people who litter although it did provide me with the cork I needed. Maybe it was OK to litter in this instance??? **NO** – it was not and **never is alright to throw your rubbish out of your car**. Got a shell from the stop at Yard Art – no need to find a Shell Station after all. A glance around the car proved to be a bonus. There was my plastic bag with some of the cards from the Poker Run. Maybe, just maybe there will be a Queen of Hearts there and stop me looking for a picture of Helen. Yes!! Feather still required. I resisted the temptation to ‘lose control’ of my car going around a corner that just happened to have a Pukeko wandering about because that is not the sort of thing Samwise Gamgee would have done.

This was turning out to be a genteel cruise through countryside ranging from the long straight flat of Karaka to the ups and downs of Bombay/Paparimu that would challenge any fuel economy run. I noted with satisfaction that the fuel gauge hadn’t moved much at all – maybe, just maybe the twin 1.25 SU’s would do all right. Perhaps I should have leaned them off a little? It was too late now as I arrived at the Bombay Services for the finish. The car as filled up and mileage (sounds better than kilometerage, doesn’t it) recorded. The tank took what seemed to be just a

splash of fuel (woohoo) but then I remembered the other tank (boohoo). Still 6 point not a lot litres didn't seem too bad. Job done and time for a coffee, (remember I gave up alcohol earlier), and natter with the others. The collecting of the feather provided the most entertaining parts of the run for most people by all accounts.

Once again Gary and Catherine have excelled and produced an event that dared to be different. The use of 'tulip diagrams', the questions not 'part of' the route so care and good eyes were needed, the treasure hunt and the glass of water. Rumour has it that one person held onto their full cup the whole way round. To that person – Respect! We are fortunate to have people in the Club who are able to run events like this as they are truly memorable. I can't wait for the 'Triathlon' event.

"Holy Timepiece Batman, that took over 2 hours". 100 kilometres in over 2 hours making average speed less than 50 kph so it truly was a.....**genteel cruise in the country.**

Gavin Agnew, Mini Club

Economy Run Results:

- 1st: Stephen and John Miller
- 2nd: Gavin Bowring & Tiffinie Filkin
- 3rd: Gavin Agnew
- 4th: Matthew Oliver
- 5th: Alan & Shelagh Murie
- 6th: Vic & Joy
- 7th: Mark Thompson
- 8th: Sue & Shane McLarnon
- 9th: Murray Grant & Rex Coubray

Taupo 2008

The weather was threatening from the beginning. Overcast and humid, it started spitting as I headed out to the track bright and early on Saturday morning.

We'd driven down after work Friday afternoon, arriving late at my Parents-in-law. I was keen to bunk up straight away to make sure I was bright eyed and bushy tailed the following day but the obligatory catch-up kept sleep at bay till the wee hours. So I was feeling pretty much the way the weather looked as we rolled down Broadlands Road at 7:30am.

I almost missed the turn to the track entrance and locked up attempting to heroically adjust for my error, a reminder that I still wasn't used to my new brakes and that the rain was going to make the track like ice after several weeks of drought temperatures. My wife shot me a glance from the passenger seat, you know that look.

Arriving at the track was a pleasant surprise with plenty of others also up early rearing to go. In comparison to previous years where we've still been inspecting latecomers cars when we were supposed to be on the track, this year everyone was ready to go before the track was! Due to a miscommunication between the track officials and the MaNZ man, we weren't allowed onto the track till concrete barriers were in place at the end of the back straight, to ensure no one accidentally joined the HSV club on their side of the tarmac. After a bit of a delay and the drivers briefing we were good to go.

First up, driver training. This is, from my point of view, the best way to start a club event like this one. The majority of participants each year are not race drivers and most have never been on Taupo track before (myself included). Getting 3 or 4 laps with someone who's been there, done that in a car probably faster than yours is a great chance to learn the racing line and the braking points before you really attack it. It also gives the car a chance to warm up after sitting during registration and briefings.

Once those that wanted training had been out, everyone was gagging to get on the track so the "uncontrolled practise" began. As organisers we decided the best way to get everyone the track time they needed was just to get as many cars on the track for as long as possible. To this end we decided to have the majority of the day as uncontrolled, untimed practise. This meant 8-12 cars on the track for up to 15 minutes at a time.

Personally I loved it. A chance to go hell for leather around an excellent track without any pressure. No times, no placings, just racing against you're own ability. The surface is absolutely mint as most of it was newly laid for the AIGP.

Fortunately the weather, though continuing to threaten, stayed simply overcast with the odd bit of drizzle that quickly dried when it stopped. This kept the temperatures down and the pace up. My new brakes were brilliant, I could pull up as hard as I liked at the end of the straight lap after lap and they never faded, meaning I could keep the intensity

up for the whole 15 minutes instead of doing 2 hard laps then coasting into the pits to the pungent smell of cooked pads, which was the case last year.

Lunch was excellent. I'm pretty sure no-one went hungry as there was still a fair amount left at the end, thanks go to Matt for organising a fitting feast. We also managed to squeeze in a photo of all attendees. It took a while to set up, but I think it was worth it to immortalise the day and those who enjoyed it.

Now everyone knows that things rarely go exactly according to plan and Murphy had one last spanner to throw at us before the day was out. We had planned to finish the day with a couple of hours of timed dual car sprints. That's 6-8 cars on the track, started in pairs sprinting for 3-5 laps. Unfortunately the MaNZ man was having none of that since some drivers didn't have MaNZ licenses so we were forced to continue practice. What we did instead was to turn it into an unofficial "single car sprints" where cars were started one at a time from pit lane and timed for 8 laps. My apologies to those who didn't realise when the timing had begun and claimed they could have done better, although you hardly seemed to be dawdling! Next year we'll get that part of the day right, I promise.

During the last session of the day, the heavens opened. I was amazed it had waited that long! I was lucky enough to be enjoying the ride of my life in Alan's Supercharged LS1 engined 240z at the time and I must say, things got a little squirrely under brakes at the end of the main straight after the first dollop of rain. We survived though, proceeding to break all laws of physics over the course of another few laps before deciding we were doing more swimming than lapping and paddled into the pits.

Everyone seemed to have decided they were satiated anyway and most had retreated to the clubhouse to dry out and, with flailing arms, explain just how close they'd come to disaster before correcting with superhuman skill and dexterity, or not. More than a few had taken a look the wrong way down the track at some point in the day.

Besides a few mechanical hiccups I think everyone had a great time, including myself. As a driver I'd like to say a huge thanks to the organisers, especially my wife Rachel who helped all day with registrations and then timing, despite having to be coaxed to the track at all. And as an organiser I'd like to say a huge thanks to the drivers, who for the most part were exemplary in their conduct.

Unfortunately my wife and I had to head off to Hamilton as soon as the event was over, so I'll leave it to someone else to report the festivities that followed. Bring on Taupo 2009, I'll be doing my part to ensure it's even better. If you have some ideas about how we can achieve this, or just feel like helping out, you're welcome to join the organising committee.

See you next year!

Pest.

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