

Orient Express



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

Issue 75, July 2009

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Contents

Committee.....	1
Contents.....	2
Hibernating?.....	3
Coming events.....	4
Necessary Acceleration.....	6
Nissan 370Z Launch.....	7
King of the Mountain cruise.....	9
Hello everybody!.....	10
Wellington Workshop Visit	12
Z Tunnel Run.....	14
Mini Night Trial	16
Karting A1GP 2009.....	18
40 years of the 240z.....	19
Caption competition.....	20

Hibernating?

Well, we're well into another chilly winter. But don't fret! There's still stuff to attend if you can brave the cold. We have at least one event planned every month till the end of the year, interspersed with Nog'n'natters and club committee meetings. Please check out the upcoming events and make the time to get in amongst your fellow Z enthusiasts.

As usual the last few months have been packed with stuff to get the home body out and about. We've had Karting, Cruising, Challenges and Food, All chronicled below. It's been great to see guys from outside Auckland organising events and getting good participation. We look forward to seeing more events held south of the Bombay hills!

If you attend an event, please consider submitting an article for the club rag. It doesn't have to be long or articulate, we just love to hear different members points of view (and it saves me some typing :P)

We recently had the official NZ launch of the new 370Z. Yes, if you have the coin you can now rock down to Nissan and drive away in the GTRs little brother. All reports are good so far and it certainly looks the part. If you're lucky enough to take delivery of one of these sexy beasts, I'd like to put my hand up to take it for a test drive. As a journalist of course! I promise to report thoroughly on its handling, power, and top speed. Since I have no fancy equipment, a quick blat down the Hunua road (to test power and handling) and then on to the Thames flats (for top speed) will be in order. I promise to return it (note; I do not promise in what condition).

Right. Fantasy over. I look forward to seeing you all soon. One last thing; I've heard a few people say they felt they couldn't attend an event because they couldn't arrive in their Z. Please know that this is a club of Z enthusiasts and our events are held for the enjoyment of our members, not their cars. While we all love to see the Zs out in force, it's perfectly acceptable to show up in your daily driver.

Catch you on the flipside.

Luke/Pest



Coming events

Brunch at Blossoms Cafe Kumeu & then a cruise

When: Sunday 16 August 2009, 10:00am

Where: Blossoms Cafe, cnr Highway 16 & Coatesville/Riverhead Highway Kumeu, Auckland, 09-412 6071

Why: Brunch and a cruise somewhere afterward (cruise details tba)

Event organiser: Bronzee

Please indicate your attendance and how many in your vehicle on the website, or contact Bronzee or the editor.

Monthly Z Club Committee Meeting

When: Thursday 3rd September 2009, 7.30pm

Where: South Auckland Car Club Rooms, 1 Great South Rd, Papakura

This is our monthly committee meeting. Open to all club members to attend.

Cruise to Hampton Downs Race Track, Waikato

When: Sunday 27th September 2009, 10.30am

Auckland meet point: BP Quickstop Drury carpark - Southern motorway

What to bring: tank of gas, friends or family that would like to check the track out, money for lunch/bring lunch

Website: <http://hamptondowns.com/>

Meet at 10.30am have morning tea/brunch @ BP Quickstop

Depart 11.30am BP Quickstop Drury & head to Hampton Downs

Arrive @ Hampton Downs before 1pm

At Hampton Downs approximately 1-2 hours

Stop at Mercer for lunch

This is a look see only so we can get a feel for the track & the whole complex with a bit of tour around.

Monthly Z Club Committee Meeting

When: Thursday 01 October 2009, 7:30pm

Where: South Auckland Car Club Rooms, 1 Great South Rd, Papakura

This is our monthly committee meeting. Open to all club members.

Karangahake Gorge Walk & Cruise

When: Sunday 04th October 2009

Meet point Auckland: 9am, BP Quickstop Drury carpark.

Meet point in Waikato: 9am, New World car park in Hillcrest.

Meet point in Paeroa: 10am, The carpark with huge L & P bottle.

What to bring: gold coins for our clubs chosen charity - St Johns, tank of gas, torch & spare batteries for torch, solid comfortable walking/flat shoes & spare shoes for after, friends or family, money for lunch/bring lunch, money for the train to Waihi.

There are 3 cafe's in Gorge area, so we will eat at one of those - more details to come.

How many times have you driven through the Karangahake Gorge and never stopped to check it out??

Absolutely spectacular scenery, only 1.5 hours from Auckland city. Sheer rock faces, rivers, walkways carved out of the rock faces, lots of tunnels, suspended walkways, historic area in NZ history - this has it all. We will stay on the easy fairly flat Windows Walk track & go through the 1km long tunnel. Maximum 2 hours easy walking around through the lower flatish areas, very little exertion.

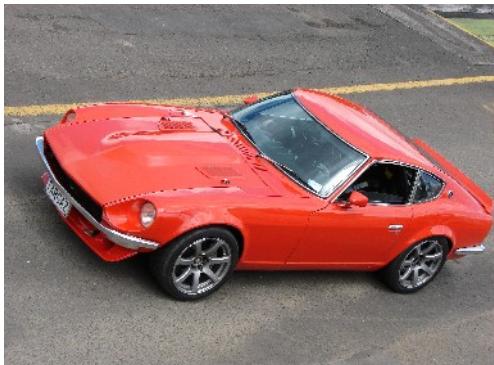
For those that are keen there is a train 4kms down the road that you can ride up to Waihi and back. At that point there are also some really interesting historic ruins (Talisman Battery) associated with the mining, another cafe, and an information type centre.

Necessary Acceleration

Well this is my first story for the Z Club Magazine and seeing I had such a great time, I felt I had better do my part and share my story.

As you all know I was doing the lap timing with the help of a few of the drivers wives and I have to say we were expecting some bribes and we got nothing!! Next time guys we'll take \$10 per second you want shaved off your lap time.

There were some impressive laps done by people and most people were pretty consistent at slowly improving their lap times as the day went on and they became more comfortable on the track.



Besides the lap timing as this isn't what this story is about.

I got the opportunity to do a few laps in one of those 'real race cars'. You know the noisy ones that go freakin' fast.

I would like to thank Allan Lewis for the chance to do a few laps in the hot seat of his 240z. I was totally blown away at how savage a graceful looking vehicle can be.

I wasn't really scared, nervous or excited when I was finally strapped in and ready to go, as I really had no idea what I was in for. I can't really explain how I felt. I think I was excited but not the same kind of excited as opening a present, I haven't had this type of anticipated excitement before so can't really explain it. You will have to try it for yourself. Trust me you'll love it.

I'm not a huge fan of top speed but I love acceleration and deceleration, and I have to say his car definitely has plenty of what I like. It's not short in the 'getting there in a hurry' department.

Under heavy braking your face squishes to the front of your helmet and you have trouble holding your head up, and in hard cornering you feel like one of the bobble head toys with every bump on the track. It was a totally awesome feeling.

It was definitely an experience I will remember for sometime – I loved it. Thanks so much Allan.

Over and out until the next one

Rachel Pascoe

Nissan 370Z Launch

On a wet cold Sunday morning some of the Z club members went to Schofield Nissan to go over the new 370z.



When I arrived, Kelvin, Andy & Allan were in attendance so we spent some time drinking coffee and inspecting every little part of the car. We all decided we liked the car and to my surprise there were hardly any negative comments.

Sign on the dotted line and take the keys. Kelvin got the drivers seat and I got the passengers. Adjust the seat, find out where all the controls are and most important the wiper controls. Out to the very wet Great South Road and down to Greenlane Road to the motorway. Too wet to try much but the car had plenty of get up and go in a straight line and Kelvin enjoyed the paddle shift. Off at Khyber Pass and thru Newmarket back to the showroom.

The seat has lots of adjustment positions and the instruments move with the steering wheel so over all it is easy to find a spot that will suit all driving positions.

I drove the car next and generally the car felt very positive and responsive to the road. The paddle shift was the best paddle shift I have driven with. In drive, things were a bit boring but for round town and heavy traffic it was ok.



On such a bad day it was not possible to do any real driving but in spite of this the car has a good feel and from my point of view looks great. I guess the trouble you will have will be to decide what colour.

Cheers

Dale



King of the Mountain cruise

The day dawned cold and very wet. Shall we or shan't we. YES let's go. We haven't been on a run and seen Z people for a while. Let's go and catch up.

We arrived at ALERT MOTORSPORT in Mt. Wellington. Nobody else was there. Sat and listened to the radio in our Will Cypha whilst the rain was still teeming down.

Brian is still not able to drive yet so the 240 is nice and dry at home. Have we got the right day and time? We didn't check the website before we left!!

A car pulled up. Looked promising. Out got someone unfamiliar. Some poor sod with a flat tyre. He proceeded to change it in the pouring rain in his best pants and shirt. Must have to be somewhere soon and not able to wait for the rain to ease.

Dee and her grand daughter arrived. Good, right day. Still raining hard so we waved through the misty windows and waited. Bernie and Jeanette, Imogen and two cars from the Mini Club arrived followed by Dale and Luke and Rachel.

Dale lined us up against the wall (out of the rain) to deliver the instructions, then one by one we are timed and departed.

Brian is very good at direction and he is doing the navigating, so confidence is high that we won't be LAST this time. We decided to do Pidgeon Mountain first do the circuit of the other Mountains, back to Mt. Wellington and on to lunch at 44 Lunn Avenue to the Coffee Club for lunch.

All going well except we got every red light and Sunday driver. I constantly got from the passenger seat, pass him, faster, faster. Remember the intersection adverts was the reply.

Doing well with the clues but time is ticking by. Half way around I needed a comfort stop and found some toilets on Mt. Albert. On walking in they smelt really bad. PHEW. Turns out it's a long drop. Didn't think they were around anymore. Oh well at least there was running water to wash your hands. Very hygienic!!

Back to Mt. Wellington for lunch. Easier said than done. You would think 44 would be beside 46 but No. The numbers go 38 then 46. We were looking for 44 and not the Coffee Club. Big mistake. We actually drove past 44 which turned out to be opposite number 80. Go figure Auckland City Council!!!

We now had a 30 minute penalty and are last to arrive again.

Everyone was there already and had ordered lunch, so we ordered our coffee and lunch. Good conversation with good company followed.

Great Day. Thanks to the organisers.

(Looking forward to summer.)

Sheryl

Hello everybody!

I'm Karl, a mechanical engineer and long time Z lover, first time Z owner. I've wanted a 240Z since first being able to drive some 20 years ago. Now that they are getting more expensive and less available I decided that it was time to get one or miss out.

Much to my wife's disgust I found a limey yellow example in Wellington, a little rough around the edges, but with low mileage and a very little rust.

First step once you buy a 38 year old car is to hop on the web and find out who else is mad enough to have one. www.zclub.org.nz! loads of crazies out there. Great!!



I saw that some of you were heading off for a drive through the tunnel and onto Warkworth, this was my first taste of the Z Club. Everybody seemed very friendly and rather normal. So we filled out our membership forms and sent them off.

The next event that was showing on the calendar was the 40th Anniversary Lunch.

Sunday morning had blue skies and sunny. Now the joy of having a car that requires a re-spray is I did not need to do any of the wax on, wax off ritual that most other members would

Orient Express



Steve Millen, our club patron.

have been doing at that time of the day. Just jump in the car and off we go. We arrived at 'The Brigham' at 11am sharp and were warmly greeted by the ever smiley Imogen, who directed us to the gardens out the back where all the Zeds were parking up.

The next few hours were then spent admiring the Zeds and chatting to other like minded people. Good food, good conversation (all talk about cars is good conversation) and some great cars, what better way to spend a Sunday.

As a newbie to the club it was a very welcoming experience. My wife is even thinking about getting another Z so that she can join in (we have 2 young boys, so we are going to need another one). The only downside to joining this club, with its wealth of knowledge and support, is that the list of things to do to the car is growing longer and longer with every member I speak to.

A big thanks for all the hard work put in to make a very enjoyable afternoon out. I'll see you all at the next event.

Cheers.

Karl

Wellington Workshop Visit

Saturday 25 April 2009

After making excuses for many months because my own car was still in bits and after a few well timed prompts from Murray (ZYX), Sunday 25th April marked the first Z Club organised event held in the Wellington region in many years (maybe the first ever??). Great turnout for the first event with 12 cars in attendance although 5 didn't have Z on their nameplates anywhere. That said, the non-Zeds were either Datsuns or owned by Zed owners so was a good first start.

We started by meeting outside Repco in Paraparaumu which was a good opportunity for everyone to introduce themselves and inspect each other's cars.

Great to see WikedZ all the way from Hawkes Bay in his 280ZX and accompanied by Pilot.P in his 300ZX from Palmerston North. Clive Newman (a Z Club member from way back, Targa competitor and frequent racer in a 260Z) was in his late model Corvette that he has recently imported – Clive was sufficiently motivated by the event that he has started work on a refresh of his 260Z race car so that it can again be road registered and he can then join us in future events. Also good to see Glen from the Datsun forum there with RPV1's daughter – some good opportunities for us to co-ordinate with some of the local Datsun owners so that we can get some decent numbers to our events.

So we had 2 300ZX, 3 240Z, 2 280ZX, 2 Datsun 1200, 1 Datsun 120Y, a Corvette and a Mazda.



We then moved on to have a look at my two lock-ups and 40 foot container. Among all the various Zed parts in there is a 240Z/260Z rolling shell made

up of bits from 3 different cars and destined to be a race car one day. Also a 1967.5 low screen Datsun Roadster waiting for restoration and a 73 240Z shell also on the restoration project list. What can I say about my own collection of parts other than even I am not sure what is in there! One day I will make enough time to have a sort out and organise things so I can actually find them!

We then left on the 25 minute drive to Loud'n'Low Customs workshop in Porirua. This business is run by ZYX's son Tim who had a variety of interesting projects in there as well as ZYX's 280ZX which he is restoring. And if you are into cars as most of us are, this workshop certainly showed a good cross section of what a diverse hobby we are involved with. From Cadillac, to 280ZX, BMW with Mazda Rotary, Mazda 323 with rotary, utes with air bags, vans with neat sound systems. A real feast for the eyes.

Then a few of us toured to that well known Scottish restaurant in nearby Paremata where we had a rather late lunch and more Datsun chat.

So a good start for our first event, great feedback from all who participated and the forerunner of many more gatherings.

old_datto_fan



Z Tunnel Run

Sunday 12th April 2009

You know it's going to be fantastic cruise when you arrive half an hour early positive you'd be the first to arrive and are greeted by a solid carpark of Zeds rearing to go. Our allotted meet point at BP Quickstop on the Northern motorway just north of Albany, Auckland. They'd come from as far and wide as Paeroa, Hamilton, Manawatu and across Auckland on an Easter Weekend overcast Autumn Sunday morning, without even temptation of choccy Easter Eggs.

One by one, we headed inside to "pay" homage to the tunnel ticketing machines, although a little sluggish, it seemed to work okay after the well publicised troubles since the official Tunnel opening in January. Fees paid, it was time for the 16 Zeds to head on our merry way to check out the new Puhoi Tunnel, sort of resembling a trail of elephants in chronological order much to the bemusement and fascination of other motorists, taking photos as they passed our convoy.



Quick someone get the club kitty out, we could have made some currency from all those voyeurs. Hehe, 5 bucks a photo!!

We were busy taking in the sights of the new motorway, the overpasses, the looovely smooth surface, our co-pilots taking photos, and checking out the tunnel we'd come to investigate.

We duly roll up at our destination at the Warkworth Cement Works. The slightly bland, muddy, gravel carpark belying the interesting relics inside, but with this many Zeds shuffled into order we made a lovely ark. Amazing how stunning a carpark can become, or was that just the Zeds?! I don't think I've seen that many cameras appear at some hot tourist spot! Eat your hearts out Japanese tourists.

Cameras almost but not quite exhausted of card space, we wandered to the picnic areas to chat and chomp on lunch.

The Warkworth Cement Works is an odd place, imposing, dark, almost disturbing atmosphere. The fairly deep, large lake taking place of where once was mined and the surrounding dishevelled Willows malting their leaves on the overlooking cliff, leaving it appearing a little spartan, apart from the odd native, tree that is, and the very dilapidated remnants of the cement works reflecting into the dark liquid. Ducks were contentedly paddling around, hoping to steal some of our lunches altering the atmosphere, being the cheeky little creatures they are.

Wandering around the relics a bit more, seeing the incredibly warped old Pine Tree literally exploding out of the confines of the concrete walls and the warped Cabbage Trees, makes you realise what those trees were struggling to establish in.

Chocolate deprived, it was Easter after all, our path back home was calling via the familiar Z Club port of call, the ice cream shop on the main drag in Orewa. Hmm!! 7 hardy Zeds were still keen to tiki tour a bit more, so we headed for Long Bay Beach. Well, less of the beach and more the reserve for few more photos and Z chat.

Who says you need sunshine and blue skies for a fantastic day out! We only need Zeds and Z people!

Many thanks to Mike (Zedhot) for organising the event.

Cheers

Imogen aka Bronzee



Mini Night Trial

First event with the Mini club for me. Unfortunately for me I am still waiting for the great VVTNZ to okay my mods and give me my certification, so the Outlander had to be the go. Just a little ---- bigger than the Minis. Was good to see a few Z Club members join in.

Its was an extremely enjoyable evening driving over some cool streets, from Drury to Botany and back again to Drury, with a whole lot of questions and for things to look out for on the way.

I'm really impressed with the Mini guys, it was head band torches and spot lights, they were seriously looking for the answers. I must say that some of the questions needed an extra look to find the answers, we saw many a Mini turn around and back track for answers. And if I might say so I'm not 100% happy with the how many railway lines did we cross over question, given they were technically the same lines each time, but railway lines do have joins so I believe that each section can be classed as a different piece of line or break it down to (a different line).

How about the year the bridge was built, we practically had stop those Mini guys from swimming under bridge to look for the answer, it must have looked rather odd with a dozen cars and two dozen people with torch's walking around and all over the bridge. Turns out that the year was a random number which was half covered over, tell me is that a fair go. Never mind we had a great feed to look forward to at Shed Sixteen.

I have to give them credit, the food was superb. But I am unclear as to whether the 16 stood for the road number or the temperature inside the (tin shed). Sorry no it couldn't have been the temperature because it was at least -16. But what a great car shed that would have made. It was nice to have heaters hanging in the ceilings to warm us up, will have to talk to them about some insulation in that place.

But cynicism aside it was a thoroughly enjoyable evening, great company, enjoyable drive, and a really good feed, and socialise at the end. Chalk that one up for the Mini Club. Highly recommended outing for everyone.

Bernie Kant



Karting A1GP 2009

Electric karts! Got you intrigued?

This years karting Grand Prix was held at the very-new-and-shiny Formula-E in south Auckland. New Zealands only electric go-karts.

These things are worth in excess of \$15,000 each and are capable of 90km/h if the limiter is turned off. For the public, they're limited by law to 35km/h which is still plenty fast around their tight indoor course.

So what? Well for the most part these karts are pretty much the same as your regular one but the differences are important. For a start, no fumes makes the whole event more enjoyable. The place is clean and well lit. The acceleration from the electric motor is impressive and even all the way from 0 to top speed. The brakes are proper hydraulic disk arrangements which allow for good control and finally the rear axle has a diff, unlike regular karts which have a solid bar between the back biscuits. This makes them respond more like a race car in the corners.

Oh! And reverse! No more waiting for the guy to run over when you hit the wall, watching the rest of the field sweep by. Now you just flip a switch and mash the go pedal and the kart squirts backwards! Let go of the switch and you're off.

We opted for the A1GP style event. A 5 minute warmup to get used to the karts followed by three 10 lap heats, rearranging the grid for each heat. Then a 15 lap feature race.

I started in 2nd place and had a good tussle with Mike Lucas through the first couple of bends. The race officials judged one of Mikes overtaking maneuvers to be too aggressive and he was penalised (hard luck mate) so I sailed into the lead. I managed to hold of a concerted charge by Andy for the next few laps and then the chequered flag flew.

It was an awesome night and I'll definitely be going back, I can recommend Formula-E if you're looking for a challenge.

Results:

1. Luke
2. Dan
3. Andy
4. Mike
5. Roo
6. Mark
7. Rachel
8. Robert



40 years of the 240z

On 3rd May the Club had a lunch get together to celebrate the 40th Anniversary of the Datsun Z.

85 Club members and guests enjoyed a warm sunny afternoon at The Brigham restaurant in Auckland.

The Club executive had agreed there was a need to join the World Wide celebration and a group of us telephoned all the present members. We all were pleasantly surprised at the turnout for the lunch, but we had another large group of past and present members and visitors who came to see one of the largest Z Car turn outs seen in recent years.

Steve Millen who was visiting New Zealand with his wife Jodi, shared his history with Datsun and Nissan. Nissan NZ were represented by Mike Gilmore (City Nissan) , Patrick Maddren and Scott McKeown (Scholfield Nissan).

Mike had bought along the new GTR since the new 370z was not yet available.

I had the pleasure of being "MC" with Steve Millen, the Nissan Reps, our President Dee and Club Captain Kelvin sharing a few thoughts of their part in the history of the Club and car.

The Brigham had allowed us to park our cars on the grass in the garden, and when you see 40 Z's parked around an old villa on a Sunny Auckland day, it was easier to justify the many hours of work we all put into our cars. They all looked great! Even a Drag car in a 240 body!

The original 240z is still today a wonderful shape, and Nissan have carried a few similarities through each of the later variants.

When my family bought our first Z in October 1971, we thought it was a well equipped, fast and comfortable sports car. Most car magazines and owners agreed with us!

However, nearly 40 years later, the difference between the 240 and our 350 is considerable! Both cars parked side by side give me a school boy smile, but there the similarities end. Heated seats, twice the power, power steering, fly by wire accelerator, air conditioning and a 7 speaker stereo are now considered standard on a car. The road handling ability of the later car, makes me wonder how on earth Dale, Kelvin and I ever survived some of the racing we did years ago. But we did and Nissan have survived along with the new 370z. Its even further advanced than the 350. What does the future hold and what will happen to those cars we saw parked on the lawn at the Brigham?

Stuart

Caption competition

Last issue I asked you to bend your wit to this picture:



The winner: "Aaah ooooop Bernard, ooo BERNARD get off my foot"
Thanks NOSFEDZ32!

This months challenge

This snap comes from the 2006 meremere drags, our victim subject is long time member and all-round-nice-guy Steve Chong. Fire away!

Submissions to the editor by mail, email or phone.



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David Turner



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