

# SS2000 CLUB NEWSLETTER



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## 2 Litre Racing at it's Best!!



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## Ant Te Rito extends Lead!!

With 3 rounds of the Motul Oils-SS2000 Saloon Car Series now complete, Ant Te Rito managed to extend his lead after the recent Pukekohe "Thunder in the Park" round.

However, it did not start well for Te Rito. During qualifying he stopped after only 2 laps with no drive coming from his S2000 powered Honda Civic. This put him in a lowly 13th spot, to which some would say was "unlucky".

After closer inspection a failed clutch was diagnosed and both he and his team got to work. Having played a big part in the build of his car, this was to prove a great advantage to Te Rito as the replacement clutch was competed with time to spare before the first race.

He was rewarded with a 3rd in Race 1 and two wins the next



day in both handicap races, which were run in wet challenging conditions.

Coming into the round, Te Rito led the series by 23 points and by the time the weekend was over, he had extended this to 43.

His good form so far this sea-

son is seemingly at the demise of the Series other top contenders. most of whom struck trouble at this round.

Whilst the weekend may have started out very average, it certainly turned out fortuitously for Te Rito in the end.

## Major Set back for Duffin

*After last season's results and being his home track, expectations were high for Andy Duffin and his RX7 batmobile at Round 3, "Thunder in the Park" held at Pukekohe.*

*The signs were positive too when he qualified on pole with a scorching 1:05.813 lap.*

*However, in Race 1, James Parker pipped him for the lead and whilst Duffin was chasing him down, his batty blew a motor in the pre-ultimate lap. There was no question about the disappointment on Duffin's face post race and he was out for the rest of the weekend.*

*To add to this, the track officials advised him of a pending fine of \$1000 for parking his disabled car*

*in a "no parking zone" on the in field.*

*It was cruel blow that Duffin, nor any other driver for that matter, could properly comprehend given the same circumstances.*

*So strong was the feeling of this somewhat unjustified treatment of one of our competitors, that the remaining drivers, supporters and helpers, rallied up a monetary collection for Duffin. Needless to say, he was overwhelmed by the gesture and once again it shows*



*the true spirit of what our SS2000 series is all about.*

*Andy we hope this will help ease your situation somewhat and we all look forward to your return, hopefully by the next round.*

## The President's Seat



Whilst I was unable to attend round 3 at Puke early December, I did make a brief appearance on the wet day 2 of the round. I believe it was a round of high attrition, something our class is unaccustomed to. Ant Te Rito looks to be a certain contender for the championship title at the moment but as we all know racing can deliver some cruel twists and turns. Speaking of cruel blows, the punishment issued to Andy Duffin on top of blowing his motor, seemed a bit over the top. It seems that Puke is not making it easy to include them

on our race calendar for next season. It's a shame really as Puke is my home track too and it has a huge history behind it. However on a positive note, the collection for Andy really showed our true club spirit.

Thanks again to all the helpers namely: Brent for carrying out the official duties in my absence again; Scotty for your normal role plus manning the barbeque along with the help of Glenys; Motul Oils and Auckland Engineering Supplies for the spot prizes and to Hitech Motorsport for again supplying the barbeque food and refreshments.

See you all at Taupo where we are joined by the TRS series (Toyota Racing Single-seater series) after the New Year.

Cheers ..... Phil.

## Introducing the new GoPro HD Hero2 camera!!

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**Please ensure you identify yourself as an SS2000 Club member.**

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## Club Notices:



### 2011-12 Motul Oils SS2000 Race Calendar

- *Rd 1 October 1st/ 2nd*      *Manfeild*
- *Rd 2 October 22nd/ 23rd*      *Taupo (Labour weekend)*
- *Rd 3 December 3rd/ 4th*      *Pukekohe (Thunder in the Park)*
- *Rd 4 January 28th/ 29th*      *Taupo (Toyota Racing Series/ Auckland anniversary weekend)*
- *Rd 5 February 4th/ 5th*      *Hampton Downs (Toyota Racing Series/ Waitangi weekend)*
- *Rd 6 February 25th/ 26th*      *Manfeild*
- *Rd 7 April 7th/ 8th*      *Taupo (Easter weekend)*

### Pit Shirts

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or team member.



**Contact:** Bob on 027-4504888



**Taupo Round 4 Entries  
are now due!!**

**Entries close 13th January, 2012**

**Send your entries & payments directly to:**

**Taupo Car Club Inc, P O Box 15340**

**Dinsdale, Hamilton 3243**

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## Club Notices (cont'd):

### You'll Need one of These!!

Refuelling rules now require each team to have a 4.5kg dry powder fire extinguisher in their pit area.

Available to all SS2000 competitors:

ABE 4.5kg dry powder fire extinguisher at \$82.00 incl GST.

Contact: Nicky at AES (Auckland Engineering Supplies)

Ph: 09-3588446 Mob: 021-530076

AES supports SS2000, so support AES!!



### Free Round Entry Prize!!

Latest winner of the FREE entry prize to Round 4 was **Brian Hamilton.**

As a gesture of goodwill, Brian generously gifted this to Andy Duffin due to Andy's misfortunes of Round 3.

### Warning 95db Noise Limit!!

Please be advised that a 95 decibel noise limit maybe policed at all tracks. A number of competitors were pulled up at a recent race meeting and this pattern looks set to continue for the rest of our season

So be warned. Get you exhaust checked before you get caught and it ends up spoiling your weekend!!



## Bits & Pieces

- Following the wet Pukekohe round recently and in the interests of safety, there has been a suggestion that the current rain lights are still proving inadequate. Maybe its time to adopt the same flashing rain lights as the current BNT NZ V8s and a number of other classes are starting to use (remit for the next AGM perhaps?).
- If you think the Thunder in the Park round saw lower than usual field numbers, then you were right but not as low as the recent Tier 1 meeting at Ruapuna. How does 11 BNT NZV8s and 14 Suzuki Swifts sound?
- The current and ex SS2000 racers that competed in the NASA 25 hour endurance race at the Thunderhill Circuit in Sacramento—USA as reported in the last issue, had their efforts curtailed. Whilst in the hands of Richard Gee, the Motul Oils sponsored Civic FD2 rolled 5 times during practice, was badly damaged and could not continue. Note: Driver escaped with minor injuries.
- It was reported that over 100 cars/ competitors were pinged for exceeding the noise limit at the recent Pukekohe "Thunder in the Park" meeting. Some were fined, some chose to withdraw and some made the effort to modify their exhausts to comply.
- Round 4 at Taupo in late January will see us join in with the Toyota Racing single seaters. There is a huge contingent of 15 young up and coming overseas talented drivers enlisted to race and it will be interesting to see if this draws in extra spectators.

## Ponder This??

At the recent Pukekohe "Thunder in the Park" round, it seemed officialdom played a strong part of the weekend. Most competitors appreciate that the officials and helpers are volunteers and are just doing their job and without them we would not be able to compete in our favoured sport. So did they overstep the mark or were they just acting on instructions of other parties concerned??

There are a number of unanswered questions surrounding the policing of the 95 decibel noise limit. How come a car racing on one day, has no changes made to the exhaust and is deemed over the noise limit the next day? Is Puke suddenly falling victim to another Western Springs scenario due to new residents moving into the area? Is the measuring equipment used accurate/ consistent and are the users qualified to use such equipment?

The "no parking zone" enforcement also raises some questions as well. When has getting your disabled car off the track to a safer spot as quickly as possible so as not to disrupt the race, taken a back seat to a supposedly "zoned off area"? If a "no go zone" is breached should the breach not be assessed on a case by case basis based on the circumstances that led to the breach?

Is such officialdom doing Pukekohe any favours? Are these the signs of a forced premature end to its use as a motor racing circuit? I'm sure a lot of us will be wondering now about its future.



## Race report: Pukekohe—Round 3—Dec 3rd/ 4th

Pukekohe hosted Round 3, the "Thunder in the Park" meeting in early December. It was the last round of the year, with day 1 being dry and day 2 wet. One withdrawal, left 18 cars to front the grid. A high attrition rate and subsequent withdrawals on day 2 left the field somewhat uncharacteristically depleted though.

**QUALIFYING**— Andy Duffin (RX7) quickly got into his stride by claiming pole on his home track and look set to repeat his performance of 12 months ago. James Parker (RX7) was not far behind, with Brett Killip 3rd and Graeme Smyth 4th, making the first two rows of the grid an all Mazda affair. Grant Te Rito (Corolla) was the top 1600 at 5th, Brent Thompson (Civic 2ltr) 6th, Grant Shirley (Integra 2ltr) 7th, Gary Wilson (Civic 1600) 8th, Derin Greenslade (Nissan Silvia turbo) 9th and Shayne Morgan (Sentra turbo) 10th. However, Thompson's position was short lived when the Civic broke a bottom front suspension arm and being specially fabricated, he was forced to withdraw. Ant Te Rito only completed 2 laps and was well down the field when his Civic 2ltr suffered a clutch problem (see story on pg 1). Three cars also fell victim to the noise police.



**SCRATCH RACE 1**— At the start, Duffin got pipped by Parker who shot off into the lead with Duffin, Killip and Smyth chasing behind. Both Te Rito brothers got great starts with Ant already up to 7th place from his 13th starting position. Greenslade had also made up a couple of spots to sit behind the leading group of 5. After lap 1, the safety car was deployed when Ivan Knauf ran out of brakes in his Corolla at the hairpin. With Knauf having rejoined, the safety car stayed out until after lap 4 as Ray Brown's Civic also left the track at the hairpin due to a loose steering arm. When racing did resume, not much changed as Parker was still ahead of Duffin, Killip and Smyth, with the margin now a lot narrower. Within 2 laps though, Ant Te Rito had overtaken his brother Grant's Corolla, Greenslade's Silvia and Smyth's

RX7 to sit behind the leading trio of "battys". Further back Duncan Hedges (Datsun Coupe), Brian Hamilton (Capri turbo) and Ian Martin (RX7) were having a tussle on their own. With one lap to go, Gary Wilson (Civic 1600) had to pit due to a mysterious misfire and Duffin's pursuit of Parker ended with a blown motor causing a small fire under the hood of his RX7. To make it worse, where Duffin ended up parking the disabled RX7, was deemed a no go zone and he was issued with a hefty fine. So Parker scored the win from Killip, Ant Te Rito was 3rd, Smyth 4th, Greenslade 5th, Grant Te Rito 6th, Morgan gained a trouble free 7th, Shirley 8th, Todd Prujean (Starlet) 9th and Hedges 10th.



**HANDICAP RACE 2**— On a wet track, Chris Sklenars (Corolla Levin) started from pole with Knauf and Hamilton following but it wasn't long before the latter two drivers got in front of him, with Knauf leading the way. Parker was the last car to leave and both he and Ant Te Rito would soon dis-

pose of Killip ahead. Unfortunately for Parker though, he was deemed to have jump started and would incur a time penalty but not before getting ahead of Te Rito's Civic. Morgan pitted on lap 3 with limited or no visibility and on the following lap Sklenars in his pursuit of Knauf, went off coming over the hill onto the front straight damaging his Corolla. This brought out the safety car and effectively nullified the handicap advantages. Brown's Civic also went off yet again at the hairpin, prolonging the presence of the safety car. Parker was sitting in 3rd at this stage but both he and Ian Martin (RX7) were also black flagged supposedly due to no rain lights, with Martin pitting to rectify the issue. The race resumed on lap 7 and it wasn't long before Parker took the lead with Ant Te Rito following him. Knauf had slipped back to 3rd and Hamilton got swamped by Wilson, Prujean, Shirley, Hedges, Killip, Grant Te Rito and Smyth. So Parker crossed the line first but as he chose not to serve his black flag plus his time penalty, he was disqualified and excluded from the results of this race. Ant Te Rito was then classified as the winner, Knauf a fine 2nd place, Killip 3rd, Wilson 4th, Shirley 5th, Grant Te Rito 6th, Prujean 7th, Hedges 8th, Smyth 9th and Martin 10th. A post race incident saw Smyth run into the back of Grant Te Rito's Corolla causing extensive damage to both cars and their subsequent withdrawal. It was thought that Smyth didn't see the chequered flag due to poor visibility.



**HANDICAP RACE 3**— The huge attrition rate and a number of withdrawals reduced the grid to half the number that started the weekend. Hedges started on pole followed by Knauf, Prujean, Brown, Shirley, Wilson, Killip, Ant Te Rito and Parker last. Hedges went on to develop a big lead and maintained this for quite a few laps. Wilson was enjoying the wet conditions and had gained ground on both Prujean and Knauf, overtaking both to lie in 2nd place by lap 2. Meantime

## Race report (cont'd):

Ant Te Rito had progressed to 6th and within another few laps, got in front of leader Hedges. Shirley seemed to be also having a good run too and was heading for a finish inside the top 5. With only 1 lap to go, Ant Te Rito remained out front, Shirley had moved up to 2nd, Wilson was challenging Hedges for the last podium spot and further back in the field Parker had only just slipped by Killip. So after a magnificent drive in the wet conditions, Ant Te Rito took his second victory of the weekend, Shirley placed well for 2nd, Wilson 3rd, Hedges 4th, Prujean 5th, Parker 6th, Killip 7th, Knauf 8th and Brown completed the 9 finishers.

With his two wins and a 3rd place, Ant Te Rito won his second consecutive round and extended his championship lead further.

**NEXT ROUND—Taupo—January 28th & 29th.**



### Reminder:

**Don't forget!!!**

**The next two rounds (ie: Rounds 5 & 6) after Taupo follow in close succession and you will need to get your entries in promptly!!**



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## Pit Exit

What a difference the weather makes and there is no doubt that the majority of race drivers prefer dry track racing versus wet. Certainly Round 3 at Pukekohe illustrated this emphatically.

On day 2 of this round, it continued to pour down and for a number of drivers, it posed a dilemma of whether to race or not, particularly if your tyres or your confidence didn't measure up to the conditions. Add to this the known "water drainage" hazards of Puke, the humidity inside a race car limiting visibility and it can be a recipe for disaster as we know all too well.

Perhaps though as a part of our pre-season preparation we can address the likelihood of encountering wet weather conditions better. For example: installing a high powered demister fan or having an adequate method of wiping your windscreen whilst strapped in your race seat and using known windscreen demisting agents that actually work, can all help with the visibility issue. Also check your rain lights are actually working and are visibly bright enough for a car behind to see you from a distance.

However the single most confidence boosting item that you could invest in, is good quality wet weather tyres. Talk to drivers whom seem to excel in the wet before you purchase though. Until you have experienced driving in the wet on good tyres, you are almost certain to be psychologically challenged when racing in such conditions.

See you all at Taupo, rain or shine

.....Cheers, Bob



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