

## The Motorsport NZ Elite Academy Newsletter. March 2017.

### News from the Trust.

Welcome to the second of the Class of 2016's newsletters.

Once again you will find the words directly written from each of the graduates for you as this is very much their newsletter. The aim as always is to inform you on what they are currently up to and to share the ongoing support for them and the work of the academy. As Trustees, we are equally excited on the performances of not only this year's class but the many before it as well and it's wonderful to see the depth we are getting once again within the sport.

*Kieran Austis*  
*Rally Co-driver*

Hi All!

With 2017 well underway I have been busy getting ready for the upcoming Rally season and having some great sessions with my providers that the Elite Motorsport Academy has setup for us athletes to use! At the moment I'm focusing on my nutrition and trying to get a good balance between my sporting and work life! My first event for the year is coming up in March with Targa Rotorua in the Gulf Foods Toyota 86 driven by Chris Lewis! I love the Rotorua roads so it is a great way to start the year! My 2017 New Zealand Rally Championship plans are still underway and I hope to announce my plans soon!

Kieran



Jacob Smith hard at work outside the car. He is part of the M2 Competitions Team during this year's TRS Season.



*Jacob Smith*  
*TR 86 Series*

For Rounds Three and Four of the 2016/2017 New Zealand Toyota 86 Championship the Jacob Smith Racing team headed south to Christchurch and Invercargill to continue the fight to climb our way back up the Championship ladder after dropping to 16<sup>th</sup> after Round One. I had some good consistent results at Christchurch with two 4<sup>th</sup> places and a 5<sup>th</sup> and I continued that momentum on wards into Invercargill to get my best results in the Championship so far getting two 3<sup>rd</sup> places and a 2<sup>nd</sup> ending up 2<sup>nd</sup> overall for the weekend. After a good points haul in the South Island we then headed to Manfeild for the New Zealand Grand Prix meeting for our 5<sup>th</sup> Round of the Championship. I had some bad luck in race one getting taken out which did some damage to the car. I then fought hard in Sunday's races to bounce back getting two 5<sup>th</sup> place finishes driving through from the back. I have now moved up to 7<sup>th</sup> in the Championship standings and I am looking forward to the last Round at Hampton Downs on the 11<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> of March.

In between my own racing I was given an amazing opportunity to work with M2 Competition in the 2017 Toyota Racing Series to be the number two mechanic on Brazilian Pedro Piquet's car for the Hampton Downs and Taupo Rounds of the Championship. This was a huge eye opener for me and it gave me a new appreciation for how much goes into keeping those cars running and running at their best. A huge thank you to Mark Pilcher and the M2 team for the opportunity!



**Jacob Smith at Teretonga**

Hunter McElrea writes:

2017 so far has been a great year with being confirmed to contest the Australian National Formula Ford Championship with Sonic Motor Racing Services. It has been great experience so far, and pre-season testing has been very promising. My first round is this weekend at Sandown, cannot wait!



*Alexandra Whitley*  
*SsangYong Racing Series*

Since the last academy update I have been head down and bum up working on sponsorship for my next-door opener. I also kicked off my season with a ripper start achieving a podium in the first round of the series, I lost my way throughout the middle, but I am heading into the last rounds of the series with my head high and determined to finish on the podium again. As of yet I have not been successful enough to raise the remainder of the funds I need to go overseas, but this hasn't dampened my spirit as I keep my eyes peeled for next potential sponsor every day. I am excited and looking forward to what the next year of racing brings.

Alexandra.



Connor Adam in action at Circuit Chris Amon Manfeild.



## This Summer and Winter

When visiting a racetrack this summer for the remaining rounds of the Speed Works Series, take the time to look out for any of the Class of 2016. You will easily find them, as each graduate will be flying the Elite Motorsport Academy Flag outside their respective pit area. Stop in and say hi and support these drivers it means a lot to them. Then come the fast approaching Rally Season you will find those same flags within the service park areas.

## Who is the Class of 2016?

Jacob Smith TR 86

Connor Adam TR86

Jaxon Evans Carrera Cup

Hunter McElrea Formula Ford

Alexandra Whitley SsangYong Racing Series

Michael McLean Rally

Kieran Anstis Rally

Brock Cooley Touring Car

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The 2<sup>nd</sup> of July 2017 marks the date for the Class of 2017 to start to go into camp.

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That's the number of people that will go through the camp in July this year. Apply now applications are closing very soon.

## Class of 2017 Applications Now Open

[www.motorsport.org.nz/academy/elite-academy](http://www.motorsport.org.nz/academy/elite-academy)

## Connor Adam TR 86

So far this season the Team at International Motorsport and myself have been competing in our first season of the Toyota TR86 Championship. Since our first round at Pukekohe in November 2016 we have been moving up the field. With big improvements at the second round of the championship in Taupo we then carried onto Ruapuna where I got a new team mate in the form of former academy Graduate Michael Scott. We then went on to record our best performance of the season with a 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> in the qualifying's and a podium in the final race after some bad luck throughout the first two races.

We then proceeded to Teretonga where we had a shocking weekend of mechanical and electrical issues, which was hard to take after an amazing weekend at Ruapuna. The most recent round at Manfeild was a bit of an up and down weekend. After a shocking qualifying we found a tonne of pace but because of our track position we couldn't use it fully. Sadly we then ended the final race with an unavoidable incident cause by two drivers up ahead clashing. Thankfully because of the extent of the damage the car will be ready for the final round of the championship at Hampton Downs. Nothing would be possible without our awesome sponsors at BG World Wheels, Weigh Northland and the Elite Motorsport Academy.



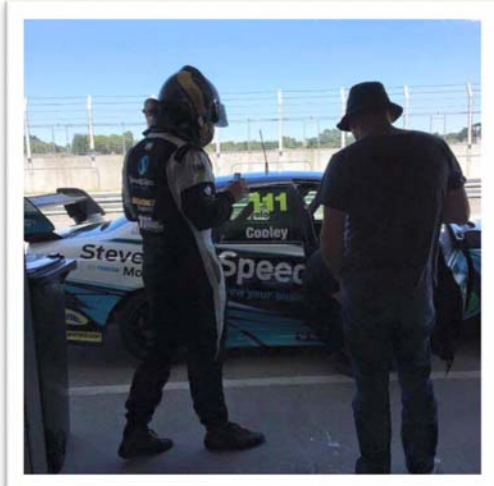
## Academy Snapshots

All the Academy drivers hard at it in recent weeks, here's a few snapshots from the rest of the graduates.

Brock Cooley stepping up to the Class 1 BNT NZ Touring Car in 2016/17.

Michael Mclean tacking Rally Sprints amongst other things as the Rally Season dawns.

*Jaxon Evans*



Hi Everyone

Since Christmas I haven't been up a to a whole lot other then recovering from a broken vertebrae - I had an accident when wave jumping on the JetSki just before Christmas leaving me in a back brace for 8 weeks!

Since getting out of the back brace I've been able to complete two test days in the Porsche 991 cup car ahead of my debut at the Clipsal 500 in Adelaide this weekend! I've been able to secure some funding allowing me to compete in the Australian Carrera Cup Championship in the Ex-Matt Campbell car running with McElrea Racing. As well as this I've also been able to lock in a drive for the Australian GT endurance rounds in the Lamborghini R-EX with Tim Miles.

Jaxon Evans



## Would you like to Support the Trust?

Contact Brian Budd for more information. We welcome your support with tomorrow's future stars.

(04) 815 8087

[brian@motorsport.org.nz](mailto:brian@motorsport.org.nz)

