

CAMERON MORISON WINS NEW ZEALAND CLUBSPORT CHAMPIONSHIP TITLE

Southland has a new national motorsport champion after Cameron Morison of Invercargill claimed the 2014 Motorsport New Zealand Clubsport Championship in Waimate recently.

Held over three disciplines - a Motorkhana, an Autocross and a Bent Sprint, Morison took the Motorkhana Championship and finished second in the Autocross Championship and did enough in the Bent Sprint to win the title. He will now receive the NZ Gold Star and the Molesworth Trophy at the NZ Motorsport Awards in Dunedin during May.



Morison was one of the least experienced in the field, defeating three-time champion Brent Redington of Napier who was runner-up this year, while former NZV8 star and sometime F5000 and Targa competitor Clark Proctor was also entered. This was only Morison's second complete season in the sport apart from four events he did prior to that time. It was his second attempt at the national title after taking advantage of the fact they were held in Invercargill two years ago. Previous winners include well known New Zealand rally stars Marty Roestenburg, Dave Strong and Mark Tapper while Craig Hewlett of the Eastern Southland Car Club won the Junior Title two years ago.

Morison, a pilot with Southern Wings in Invercargill, says "everything fell into place at the Champs. It worked well for me that the motorkhana and autocross were on grass. The car was not so good on the sprint. I was very much under the radar of the other competitors." Morison is also indebted to E Hayes & Sons who supported him in his efforts at the nationals.

Morison got into the sport after helping out a friend who was involved and finding out about the sport that way. "I used a road car for the first three events and I thought, I quite like this." He then bought a Mazda 121 for competition and to emphasise how economical it is to compete in clubsport he says the car cost him \$200. He eventually scrapped that car and he now competes in a Nissan Pulsar which he estimates owes him \$1000 - \$1500. "I have found a good car I am comfortable with and having a good car to drive makes all the difference," he says. "I have gelled with it." In the local Clubsport competition run by the Southland Sports Car Club Morison has won every round to date this season with just one round remaining at the end of the month. Last season he won the Southland Sports Car Club Sprint Trophy and the overall Clubsport Championship. Not only has Morison been competing with distinction but he has also stepped up and become the Clubsport Convenor, organising the local series. "Howard (Club President Howard Kingsford-Smith) twisted my arm," says Cameron. However he has taken it in his stride, running things and competing without missing a beat. "Once you get a system in place and you do your preparation beforehand it all falls into place," he says.

He is a wonderful advocate for this cost effective entry into motorsport too. "We have quite good opportunities to participate in Clubsport here in Southland. There is a lot going on. I don't think a lot of people realise how fortunate we are. Southlanders have always done well." As for the future Morison just wants to carry on. "I like doing clubsport. I am keen to do events like the Coronet Peak Hillclimb and Ashburton Street Sprints" he says.

Clubsport is a branch of motorsport in which competitors can take part without the need for specialised vehicles or expensive equipment. A Motorkhana requires competitors to negotiate a set course at low speed with penalties applied for errors. Autocross events require competitors to tackle a set course at speed while a Bent Sprint is run on a road course (either gravel or seal) with at least one bend. The National Championship alternates between the North and South Island each year in order to keep the competition affordable for competitors.