

# Round 1, OctoberFAST, Manfeild, Oct. 2020

The long-awaited season commenced with good entry numbers for the OctoberFAST in the mighty Manawatu. With renewed enthusiasm from Club members and a strong desire to improve on the previous year's performance, it was shaping up to be a great meeting.

Dean McCarroll was very happy with his car and was hoping that he could improve on last year's performance.

Mark Galvin had tested the Terra FX extensively after a broken cam chain had put paid to last season's racing and was quietly confident (hopeful?) that the Terra FX would prove sound for the duration of the weekend.

Robert Hulme had been very busy over the winter months tinkering away as Robert does, fine tuning and making further improvements to his Juneme in his secret Skunk Works workshop/laboratory...

Richard Kelly and Pete De Joux, aka Team Atomise, had also made some subtle changes as well as giving the Junos full services and were both roaring to go and full of enthusiasm as usual.

Nick Barker's wonderfully presented car had new dampers fitted and a new slightly larger engine (only 10hp more) and were all set for another competitive season.

Geoff Harriman had swapped his Ralt for a Tatuus TRS car which was more user friendly and looked brilliant!

Leo Francis and Jeff Sharp joined us for the Formula Libre Trophy. Leo's Suzuki had a thorough check up and he had done some winter testing. Jeff had upgraded the Hayabusa engine to 1441cc.

Nick Rae had also been busy and had installed a new larger 1441cc engine in his Radical.

Steve Sharp, not to be outdone, had also upgraded his engine (178hp) in his Tiga to keep up with the opposition.

New member, Mike Greenfield, joined in the ex-Barry Cutelli Radical SR3. Mike had done an excellent job on the preparation and it was looking splendid in its new colours.

## **Qualifying**

Dean and Mark set the fastest qualifying times, followed by Grant Dalton who improved on last year's qualifying time by 2 seconds leaving him only a second or so behind the front runners.

Robert headed up the next group of Richard, Geoff and Nick B.

The following group consisted of Nick R., Steve, Leo and Leo. Leo set the fastest time of this group reflecting the benefit of work on the car over winter.

Pete was sandwiched between the 2 groups above.

## **Race 1**

Dean and Mark put on an electrifying performance at the front of the field as they swapped fastest laps.

Grant was firmly in third place not too far from the leaders until he experienced an oil problem.

Robert held the next group at bay while Nick B. did well to jump Richard on the first lap only to retire with continuing oil surge problems.

Pete made an excellent start to lead Geoff, using his straight-line speed on the straights to keep him behind.

Nick R., Steve and Leo swapped places for the first few laps when the order settled down and Nick R. led them across the line.

Mike and Jeff also changed places in the opening laps as Mike became more familiar with the Radical.

## **Race 2**

Dean and Mark set off to repeat their performance in the first race. However, Mark had to stop after another broken cam chain, while Dean was fortuitously stopped short by shredding a cam belt taking out the crank sensor, thankfully avoiding any major engine damage.

The race was stopped to clear the track, and unfortunately Grant was unable to rejoin the race.

Misfortune struck a number of other cars as Geoff overheated and Nick R. broke a chain (too much extra power?). Leo had gear problems and Jeff was suffering from a lack of fuel pressure.

It was a race to forget for many but among all the carnage, Robert crossed the line first and Steve emerged to take third place overall.

### **Race 3**

With a depleted field, Grant, Robert and Richard quickly established this order and continued onto the finish. Pete did a great job and once again to hold off Geoff in his TRS car.

Steve fought off Nick R. after fitting new set of tyres. Jeff and Mike once again swapped places in the early laps until Jeff retired.

### **Summary**

The racing was intense throughout the field. Dean and Mark provided some excellent racing, and Grant was ever closer to the front runners.

Robert, not too far behind, was just ahead of the next group.

Steve, Nick R., Leo had some great racing with Jeff and Mike threatening to join them. Given that it was the first meeting for Mike, he put in an excellent performance.

It was a really fun weekend of racing, even the mechanical problems suffered by many didn't dampen the spirits, the enjoyment of hanging out at a racetrack and being able to race again were evident. It is shaping up to be a fantastic season, roll on the MG Classic.