

# BAY DRIVER

## Revving up the revival

After years of dreaming about racing an iconic Formula Ford, Tauranga diesel mechanic Bruce McCoy made it a reality in 2001.

"It was something I had always dreamed and schemed about," says Bruce, who treated himself to a British-made 1978 Palliser for his 60th birthday.

And the move ultimately prompted other Western Bay motorsport enthusiasts to follow him into the historic Formula Ford racing series.

"So we completely stripped it down and rebuilt it," says Bruce about the joint-project with mechanic son Alan, who he shared driving with when they competed in the last of the iconic Route P sprint race series in the car's first outing.

Tomorrow Bruce and a handful of

other Tauranga historic Formula Ford enthusiasts are racing their classic cars – all with standard Escort GT 1600cc push-rod engines – at the Taupo round of the North Island Historic Formula Ford Series.

But the top event of the season is January 16-18, at the first weekend of the Gulf Oil Howden Ganley New Zealand Festival of Motor Racing at Hampton Downs where they'll compete in front of thousands of motorsport fans.

"It's a great event. There's nothing like getting up close with some of the gleaming machinery that's going to be there," says Bruce, referring to the range of historic race cars involved.

"It took me 10 years to do it, but it was great to win the series in 2010-2011," says Bruce, who loves the thrill of racing at speeds of up to 200km/h on tracks around the country.

"But at the end of the day it's really just about participation.

"The cars are the real stars."

During the years Bruce's had four cars he's raced – initially in club competitions before helping set up the North Island Historic Formula Ford Series in 2007 – first in two Pallisers before a New Zealand-made Cheetah and the 1975 Lola, his current car.

Under his leadership the number of Historic Formula Fords racing have gone from a handful to about 40, with Bruce and son Alan driving the growth by tracking down car owners and encouraging them to get involved.

"Formula Ford is like a disease, once you get the bug you want more," says Bruce about their enthusiasm to get more cars racing in this 'pure' form of racing which has helped develop drivers for many classes. *continued...*



Bruce McCoy, in one of his Formula Ford racing cars.  
Photo by Bruce Barnard.

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