

## Battles continue at round two

Battles continued throughout the field in the Suzuki New Zealand Production Racing Championship during the second round at the Powerbuilt Tools Raceway at Ruapuna Park near Christchurch last weekend.

As an indication of exactly how close the competition was, three drivers – Logan Childs (Auckland), Scott McKelvie (Napier) and Simon Sceats (Auckland) each took away a win. Sceats, who made a late decision to compete in the championship, heads the Class C (four wheel drive) point standings with his well-sorted Subaru WRX. Sceats drew on his bank of experience by carving through the field fastest to win the reverse grid race.

Seasoned campaigner Grant Aitken kept his championship hopes alive with consistent driving throughout the weekend, while Childs, Scott McKelvie and Zane Coppins all demonstrated that they the speed required to stay in contention for the C class championship.

Last season's Class C champion Dale Williams from Auckland came away from the meeting with two Class B wins and a second placing in his Mazda New Zealand backed Mazda3 MPS. A hiccup at the start of the second race allowed Craig Stuthridge to get ahead of Williams and scamper away for a class win in that race.

Williams says that the MPS is still new in terms of the Production Racing Series and that the team is still developing the handling package, but the Honda Integra of Stuthridge and Mike Modgill have thrown down strong challenges.

While some had predicted that Suzuki Swift Sport Scholarship winner Cody McMaster would dominate at his home circuit, the racing in the Suzuki Swift Sport Cup, which coincides with Class A, was as close as that experienced at the opening round at Pukekohe. No one driver had an advantage and Mark Whyte (Paeroa), Brock Barrie (Auckland) and McMaster (Christchurch) each took turns at winning.

The heat of the racing was so intense that several cars throughout the field sported battle scars at the end of the weekend's racing. The teams have until January 18-20 when the Suzuki New Zealand Production Racing Championship battle resumes with the third round at the prestigious Taupo A1GP meeting to re-fettle their cars.

Top three points in each class following round two. (Class A and Suzuki Swift Cup) Brock Barrie 411, Cody McMaster 406, Mark Whyte 347. (Class B two wheel drive) Dale Williams (Mazda MPS) 442, Craig Stuthridge (Honda Integra) 370, Mike Modgill (Honda Integra) 353. (Class C four wheel drive): Simon Sceats (Subaru WRX) 411, Grant Aitken (Mitsubishi Evo) 348, Scott McKelvie 347.

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