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PRESS RELEASE

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SEASON DECIDER AT TAUPO FOR SUZUKI SWIFT CUP SERIES

Taupo is the championship decider for the Suzuki Swift Sport Cup, a series that has been providing some of the best national championship racing this season.

Not only is this weekend the last in the six rounds but also the pressure is on to clinch the title.

Just 29 points separate two keen young drivers - 16-year-old Wanganui lad William Bamber, who has 911 points, and 19-year-old Aucklanders Ben Dallas with 882.

Also in with an outside chance is 21-year-old Whangarei carpet layer Scott Harrison who has 731 points.

Scott is a plucky new driver who has made a remarkable come-back after a major crash at the Pukekohe season opener.

While Harrison always regarded this season as a time to gain experience, after the multi-rollover Pukekohe accident he probably never dreamt he would be lying third overall in the championship at this point of the season.

Scott showed great form at Manfeild last month, winning two qualifying races and finishing sixth in the final reverse grid event.

Watch out, too, Matt Gibson, Alan Dunkley, Bramwell King and local Taupo driver Craig Innes who is a champion Mini driver, just like his dad Bryan was in the 1960s.

Sons have a habit of following their racing dads - Shaun Lawrence is one of Graeme Lawrence's sons and has the support and help of his father who did so well in open wheeler racing a generation ago.

All Swift Cup rounds this season have produced sparkling racing and evenly matched competition.

Dallas, a snow sports equipment salesman, has been doing consistently well, finishing third behind Harrison and Bamber at Manfeild recently, while the determined Bamber is always a threat and usually the favourite.

William is driving beyond his tender year, mirroring the sort of pace shown by older brother Earl.

Last season Will narrowly missed out winning the Swift Cup but he is showing even more determination this summer and a level of confidence that's inspiring.

"Last season I learnt how to win a championship," says Bamber who reckons that while the little Swift is not especially fast on the straights, it is a forgiving car with great braking and is not difficult to drive at racing speeds.

Dallas was third in the Swift Cup for the 2008/2009 season and is a former winner of the Castrol Swift Sport Cup Scholarship.

Following a good performance at Teretonga, Ben was second overall at Timaru. At this meeting Innes showed excellent form, winning two qualifying rounds that secured him an overall victory for the weekend.

This season's Swift Sport Cup Scholarship winner Matt Gibson (18) has a background in karting, Formula First and Formula Ford.

The promising Cullinane College student is highly focussed on winning and shows he is prepared to go the extra mile to achieve his ambition to win this championship.

"I know that to win a championship I must know when to settle for second and when to push for a win," says Matt - a clear indication he is a thinking driver.

The Swift Sport Championship has matured into an exciting one-make series and this summer carries more weight as a stand-alone category.

Not only is this championship a relatively low cost formula but it provides a great nursery and training ground for young drivers.

Such is the closeness of the Swift racing that at times you could almost throw a blanket over several cars.

The Swift Sport Cup is a great stepping stone into motor racing, a class where the ability of the driver matters rather than the size of the budget.

The 1.6-litre Swift hatchbacks are not only the biggest selling small cars in New Zealand, but they also provide great racing as this weekend at Taupo will surely reveal.

Don't miss any of the three Swift races - they will be crackers.

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FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT

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