

YOUNG DRIVER TAKES TO THE TRACK

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By JEFF TOLLAN - The Timaru Herald
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JOHN BISSETT/Timaru Herald

READY TO GO: Daniel Liemburg can't wait to get behind the wheel of the Suzuki Swift this weekend at the Timaru International Motor Raceway. The 14-year-old has been racing for two years in a Starlet.

Daniel Liemburg stands with an air of confidence by the Swift he will race for the first time in Timaru this weekend.

The 14-year-old is taking to the track at the Timaru International Motor Raceway for the Suzuki Swift Sport Cup, racing against series leaders William Bamber, Ben Dallas and Matt Gibson. It will be the first time he has raced in the class.

Though he has been racing for only two years – in his trusty Starlet – Liemburg isn't worried about being in an unfamiliar class or in the grid with older drivers who have kilometres more experience.

It was a chance to try something new, he said.

The car he is driving has been leased for the weekend though Liemburg's dad, Jim, said if everything went well in Timaru then there might be a trip to Manfeild in February.

"We will see how he goes, if he totally sucks and is at the back of the field we will re-evaluate it."

But if Liemburg is at the back of Saturday's field, he has the glory of starting at the front on Sunday with a reverse grid.

Mr Liemburg said it cost about \$40,000 to follow the series through, hence the caution about casting the 14-year-old into a new arm of motorsport.

Liemburg has had only 20 laps in the car to date, at a practice run around the Levels' circuit where he was 2.5s off the fastest lap time.

The transition from the rear-wheel driven, and lighter, Starlet was nothing, Liemburg said, putting it as simply as, "it was easy to get used to".

Nerves of steel don't enter the equation – there are no nerves at all, he said – but a mentoring session on Friday with BNT V8 championship driver Angus Fogg is something the young driver is looking forward to.

Liemburg named consistency as one thing he is hoping to achieve on the circuit – and a win. While his parents will be cheering him on from the sidelines, Mr Liemburg said he was also hoping his son kept out of trouble on the track: "because it's going to cost dad a lot if he smashes it".

Keeping out of trouble? "That's what you think," Liemburg replied.

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BE IN FOR A CHANCE TO WIN

You could score a hot lap around the Timaru International Motor Raceway with John McIntyre – the leading driver in the BNT V8s' Championships after the third round at Teretonga last weekend. The

hot lap, at midday on Saturday, includes a free double pass and there are also three other double passes up for grabs, courtesy of John McIntyre Racing, the Timaru International Motor Raceway and The Timaru Herald. To enter, either drop off or post your name, address and contact phone number into us at: The Timaru Herald, 52 Bank St, PO Box 46, Timaru; or email the details to win@timaruherald.co.nz. The competition closes midday on Thursday and winners will be contacted later that day. Special conditions apply.