

*Media Release - 4th December 2008*

## **BLUE ROCKET RACING IMPRESSES WITH IMPROVEMENTS AT RUAPUNA:**

Blue Rocket Racing continued to make inroads towards the front of the pack at Ruapuna last weekend, Michael Ninkranz coming away with two respectable fourth places in the two wheel drive B class in the New Zealand Production Series, and looking solid for a second place in class in the third and final race, before accident damage forced their Mazda 3 MPS out early.

While the team has had a slow start to the season, the project was a big undertaking for them, having only commenced building their Mazda 3 to race specifications two and a half weeks out from the opening round in Taupo. The car has had significant improvements to it for each round and is now finally looking like it's ready to push the class front runners. Additionally, taking a rookie driver straight into the championship series was a big risk, but with three completed rounds under their belts they are starting to look like podium contenders and seem to be comfortable at the level of competition in the tier one events.

Driver Michael Ninkranz, whilst a little philosophical on the third race of the weekend, was encouraged by the continual pace found as the weekend progressed. "We're basically still coming to grips with the car, trying to feel out a base setup that suits me as a driver. I'm very happy with the progress we made at Ruapuna, by race three we were right on the pace with Gene (Rollinson) and Mike (Modgill), and if Steve (Taylor) had not ended our race early it just might have been our first class podium. We made up so much time through testing during the weekend, and we were right there by the end of it. If we can continue the way we're going in January and have a couple of incident free rounds I'll be extremely happy, and it should see us moving up the table."

The Blue Rocket Racing Mazda heads to Timaru and Invercargill in January, for the fourth and fifth rounds of the New Zealand Championship Series. All going to plan, the southern sojourn may prove to be the watershed moment in the team's campaign, and Ninkranz will be a driver to watch in the New Zealand Production Series.

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