



PRODUCTION RACING SERIES



The level of intensity in the battle between Japanese manufacturers Subaru and Mitsubishi lifted a notch in the New Zealand Production Racing Series round at Teretonga Park, Invercargill last weekend.

From the outset it appeared that Grant Aitken's Mitsubishi Evo 9 might have an edge Simon Sceats' Subaru WRX in the 0-2 litre turbo charged four wheel drive class. The 0-2 litre turbo class usually provides the overall front runners in PRS and Teretonga was no exception.

In the first two races Sceats and Aitken dueled, with former champion Sceats taking the chequered flag first on both occasions. In both of the races, Scott McKelvie maintained a watching brief, hoping that differential problems that had plagued his Mitsubishi during qualifying would not re-occur.

The fastest of the two wheel drive cars within the first two races was the Mazda 3 MPS driven by last season's MINI Challenge winner Craig Innes, who finished fourth overall in both races.

The situation was tense going into the final PRS race, with the grid lined up in reverse order, as is normal in the third race. Aitken used all of his many years experience as he battled determinedly to hold out Sceats. The situation reached boiling point when Sceats attempted to go around the outside of Aitken's Mitsubishi on the long and daunting loop at the end of the circuit's long front straight. The cars clashed and both went off circuit, allowing McKelvie the opportunity he had been waiting for as he shot through to gratefully accept the race win after a long and trying weekend of this team.

Sceats recovered to take second place ahead off Innes after Motorsport NZ officials adjudged Aitken to have caused the incident and penalized him with a drive through.

The NZ Production Racing Championship continues at Timaru this weekend with the battle between Sceats, Aitken and McKelvie expected to continue within the twisting confines of Timaru Raceway.