

Triple X sign Bamber, Webling and Australian Wootton for Toyota Racing Series

Auckland based Triple X Motorsport have confirmed drivers Earl Bamber (Wanganui) Stefan Webling (New Plymouth) and Chris Wootton (Brisbane) have joined their team to contest the five-round Toyota Racing Series starting mid-January in Invercargill.

Following victory in the 2009 New Zealand Grand Prix that helped elevate Daniel Gaunt to a full-time V8 Supercar position, the team expands its line-up to contest the full championship season. Former A1GP Malaysia and Formula one engineer Greg Wheeler will provide technical expertise to a team headed by A1 Team New Zealand mechanic Mark Pilcher.

In a deal that puts A1GP driver Bamber back in the Toyota series, the 19-year-old will drive the Mad Butcher sponsored Toyota FT40 open-wheel car that won the 2009 New Zealand Grand Prix.

Finishing second behind Daniel Gaunt in that race, Bamber says his decision to join Triple X Motorsport was based on a number of factors that included past performance.

"When they came and did the Grand Prix earlier this year and won it as a one-off event - they showed they have the right personnel and team to do the job," said Bamber.

"I think the team's attitude to winning races, championships and trophies - no matter what sort of car is what I'm all about - I also want to race cars and win races."

"Plus they have Mark Pilcher who I worked with in the A1 team - so there is good continuity already."

"Obviously the goal for the season is to win the championship, having finished second last time. So we're out to go one better and retain the New Zealand Grand Prix title for the team as well."

For 21-year-old Stefan Webling, the Toyota Racing Series is a step forward having finished third in last season's Formula Ford series. Bolstering his early links with the team, where he was supported by team partner VnC Cocktails, Webling is also supported by Horizon Energy Services Ltd and Miles Toyota, Christchurch.

"We considered other options," said Webling of his decision to join the team. "We know Triple X are a front running team which was proven by winning the Grand Prix last year so it was the best decision for us. Plus also having the opportunity to run beside international drivers made it a really good package."

Having raced the wings and slicks Toyota at Hamilton earlier this year, Webling's performance at the tricky venue has him confident for the coming season: "Obviously rookie of the year is our main aim. While it will be a learning year we are going for results - not only for the team, but ourselves."

Adding to the international dimension of the Toyota Racing Series, Chris Wootton, a 21-year-old from Brisbane, joins the team as a front-runner from the Formula BMW Asia/Pacific series that Bamber won in 2006.

With aspirations of Formula One, Wootton says his goal of racing in Europe in 2010 requires continual race fitness - on offer during the off-season with New Zealand's Toyota Racing Series programme.

Following two seasons of racing in the Formula BMW Pacific Series, Chris is continuing a family racing heritage that now treks trans-Tasman for a first visit to New Zealand.

With the series officially starting on Friday 15 January, the trio will have two 30 minute practise sessions at the world's most southern race venue – Teretonga, near Invercargill. Accumulated data

will be used to hone driver tactic and car setup ahead of Saturday's qualifying for the first of three races around the 2.61 kilometre circuit. Southland's historic "spirit of a nation" trophy is also contested in the weekends feature race.

The series then moves on to the second round the following weekend at Timaru raceway.

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Calendar 2010 Toyota Racing Series:

Round	Date	Venue
1 (International)	15-17 January 2010	Teretonga
2 (International)	22-24 January 2010	Timaru
3 (International)	5-7 February 2010	Hampton Downs
4 (International)	12-14 February 2010	Manfeild (NZGP)
5 (Final)	19-21 March 2010	Taupo

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