

Jason Mudgway

Class of 2007

Motorsport Mechanic/
Panelbeater



Jason's Story

Learning an automotive trade doesn't mean you have to stay in a workshop. I still can't believe I get to go to all these races, work with fantastic teams, and get paid to do it!

Jason started working at a panelbeaters after school and in the holidays. He left St John's College halfway through Y13 to begin his apprenticeship there. After working at the panelbeaters for six years, he changed to Porsche at Hampton Downs. Unfortunately, two years later, the company went bust. Rather than looking for a new employer, Jason moved back to Hamilton and started his own business - a huge learning curve that sometimes felt like jumping in the deep end. However, the original customers wanted to stay with him and funded much of the gear needed to get his venture off the ground. And the rest was - and remains - a lot of hard work, attention to detail, and good people skills.

What followed from here sounds like any car enthusiast's dream; it's certainly not your average panel beater's pathway but rather a result of following your passion, upskilling (his mechanical expertise is entirely self-taught) and long work hours: Races across New Zealand: V8 Touring car racing and Endurance series with Porsche and Ferrari. The Porsche Carrera Cup in Australia 2017/2018/2019,

the 24-hour race in Austin, Texas (working on a brand new Porsche), 6 Bathurst 12-Hour Races including in 2020 (working with the German Audi team and three professional drivers), 3 Australian Grand Prix and a race in Kuala Lumpur with a Porsche Australia team. In 2019 alone, Jason spent 22 weeks back and forward from Australia.

Covid put a spanner in the works. The Melbourne Grand Prix got shut down. Planned races in Dubai, Italy, France and the USA were cancelled. Jason turned those changes into a positive and concentrated on growing his customer base here in New Zealand.

And he's never short on work projects. He's working on a GT3 Lamborghini, a GT3 Nissan GTR and a Historic RX3 rally car. He explains he usually works around 40 to 60 hours on a car between races. The vehicles will go through extensive safety checks and service and are fully prepped for the next race. It requires attention to detail, excellent mechanical knowledge, cleanliness, and grit to complete all work within a specific deadline.

Favourite car? The Porsche 991 GT3 is top of Jason's list. And when it comes to drivers, Jason immediately mentions working with New Zealander Andre Heimgartner when he was 17/18 and now races full time in V8 Supercars in Australia. And finally. Where to next? Australia and possibly Europe next year.

I played rugby throughout high school. Tua Karalus, Chris Mourits, and Warren Asplin coached our team. We played well - we won our U14, U15 and U16 competitions! Rugby taught me to keep calm under pressure and instilled a good work ethic.