

## HARRIS AND HUDSON – ONE YEAR ON

One year ago Michelle Harris of Gore was preparing for her first rally.

The 2016 Catlins Coast Rally was her first and she describes it as a “baptism of fire” due to the icy conditions encountered on the day. However she and young co-driver, Jared Hudson of Christchurch also in his first rally, made the finish and they now line up for their second tilt at Catlins in Michelle’s Suzuki Baleno. Since last year’s debut the duo have competed in the Lawrence Rally, the Dusky Forest Rally and more recently in the Rally Of Otago and the Canterbury Rally – their first event with notes. Sadly Canterbury was their first non-finish with a crown wheel problem ending their rally. For someone such as Michelle, who has a limited budget, the Paddon Foundation Grant has been gratefully received. “It is great. It has provided me with a new set of rally tyres, says Harris who has support from the Paddon Foundation, Protecta Insurance, Carnaby Cars and Laird Motorsport & Models.

Harris is full of praise for co-driver and fellow grant recipient Hudson. “He is so good. He’s awesome. I am starting to get to know him well but he will outgrow me very quickly and the door is open for him to move to another seat whenever he wants.”

At just 13 years of age Jared is from a rallying family following in the wheel tracks of father Rocky, mother Lisa and sister Amy, coincidentally another Foundation recipient, who are all well regarded co-drivers and great supporters of the Catlins event.

“I’ve been waiting my whole life for this,” was Jared’s reaction prior to his debut last year and he now has several rallies under his belt.

His debut at Catlins with Harris was “quite stressful” in the slippery conditions but since then he has done four more rallies with her while also doing two days of the Silver Fern Rally with Warren Briggs in a Ford Mustang, the Westland Rally with Jono Taylor in a Toyota Corolla and the Nelson Rally with David Taylor in a Honda Civic. “I am trying to get as much experience and as many miles as possible,” says the youngster with a big future in front of him.

The Eastern Southland Car Club link with the Paddon Foundation has ensured Harris and Hudson receive free entry into the event and with Hudson being a recipient of a Paddon Foundation grant as well as Harris the support of the Foundation has allowed Hudson to purchase much required safety equipment. “It is so good to be able to get my own stuff rather than borrow gear.”

When he was growing up Hudson watched Hayden Paddon forging his international career and now the Paddon Foundation is helping Hudson achieve his own goals. “That is the really good thing,” says Hudson.

In a nutshell it is exactly what the Foundation was designed to do.

