

INSIGHT: MONOPOSTO RACING

The rise of Monoposto

The club single-seater series is suddenly thriving



The top Mono2000 class includes old Formula Three chassis

This year has marked a turning point for the popular Monoposto Championship.

The multi-marque single-seater category endured some testing times in recent years but, thanks to a stable competitor base and hard work from series organisers, the championship has weathered the worst of the economic crisis in fairly good condition.

As the global recession is showing signs of subsiding, Monoposto has experienced an explosion in growth. This year it was taken under the wing of MotorSport Vision Racing and grids across the board have boomed. Monoposto events have regularly attracted in excess of 40 cars across its six classes this term and it is all down to some key rule changes and hard work.

Monoposto Club chairman Nick Harrison says: "This year has been incredible. We've seen a 22 per cent increase in membership in 12 months. We've worked hard to build the series because certain aspects of our rules and organisation weren't ideal.

"We started by bringing in a new administrative team and we brought more officials to race

meetings. But, more importantly, we've become very proactive and market-focused in the structure of the championship.

"One of the biggest strengths of Monoposto is the sheer variety of cars on the grid. Our aim is to bring cost-effective single-seater racing to the man on the street, so we actively look for cars like Formula Ford Zetec 1800s or Formula Vauxhall Lotus. Cars like that have nowhere to race any more and we offer their owners a chance to get them out of the garage and be competitive again."

Establishing a clear set of stable regulations has also been key.

"We also take our regulations very seriously," says Harrison. "Every car we introduce must be run to the same technical regs imposed by its original series. This ensures cars remain cost-effective and no major tuning can be done. It also tends to make the field equal because there's often little difference in performance between similar-capacity cars."

Monoposto currently caters for almost any variant of single-seater racing car. Drivers can enter anything from a classic Formula Ford to a 2004 Dallara Formula Three car. While the lower classes, such as the motorcycle-engined



Photos: Steve Jones

Small-engined Mono1000 class offers real value for money

Mono1000, has benefitted from a modest increase in numbers, by far the largest gains have been made in the top two-litre category aimed predominantly at ex-F3 machinery.

In 2008 the club opted to split the class into two categories, one for modern and one for classic cars produced up to 1998.

Russ Giles is a regular racer in the Classic category in his Reynard 913. He is also the driver representative for Mono2000. He says: "Two years ago we looked at how to improve the 2000 class because the regulations we were running didn't work.

"We used to only allow cars to run with iron engine blocks and only with carburettors. It put off a lot of drivers wanting to run more modern Formula Three cars because they had to find old engines. The influx of these types of cars were threatening to outclass older machinery like the Formula Vauxhalls and Reynards.

"We decided to allow new technology like throttle-body fuel injection to encourage modern cars and many drivers saw it as a new challenge. We're all clubman racers and it takes a long time to build cars, so the first year was a bedding-in process, but now we're starting to see real increases. We

grew from 19 registered cars to more than 30 this year. Having the split class also allows the older cars to challenge for victories."

The lower classes have remained the club's strength, with the burgeoning Mono1000 class still providing the bulk of entries.

Chris Woodhouse is a former class champion in his Speads and has raced in the category since 2005. "Considering the lap times you do it's the best value for money series going," he says.

"There's also great camaraderie, which is the main reason drivers stick with it."

Although much of the credit for Monoposto's resurgence lays with its organisers, many are also quick to point to MSVR's contribution.

"MSVR has given us a superb platform this year," adds Harrison. "In past years we have been stuck in a bit of a rut with calendars but this year we have had a great variety of circuits and an excellent service. This has greatly raised our profile both among our current drivers and also with prospective ones. We plan to continue to grow our partnership with MSVR and we're working to expand the championship in the near future." ■

Rob Ladbrook