

Sailing into an Apprenticeship



MITO apprentice Tom Barker from Calibre Sails Ltd.

There isn't much David Parr doesn't know about sailmaking. Having spent 13 years living overseas and working on five America's Cup and five Whitbread campaigns, that's not surprising.

But when David relocated to Whangarei six years ago to set up Calibre Sails Ltd, he found it difficult to get good staff.

"Like most other manufacturing industries in New Zealand, we're facing a definite skills shortage. The only way to build my business was to employ an apprentice."

He didn't need to look far, either.

Whangarei born and bred Tom Barker (19) had competed alongside David in local sailing regattas and the pair knew each other well.

"Tom did some work experience here which went well, so we signed him up as an apprentice sailmaker."

That was 3½ years ago and David says his apprentice has fitted in well at the company that exports 95% of its sail and canvas work.

"Sailmaking is a hands-on apprenticeship and you can't learn a huge amount in the classroom. Nothing is set in concrete in this industry either, so Tom has come up with better ways of doing things, which is great to see."

Tom, who finishes his apprenticeship in June, says he couldn't have asked for a better career opportunity.

"I've been racing dingys all my life and thought I might end up as a rigger or a boatmaker. But I've loved working here and am pleased that I get a qualification at the end of it."

"I've found the coursework really manageable and Colin Kingi, MITO's Whangarei Customer Services Manager, has been there whenever I've needed help."

Tom says he's planning to stay with Calibre Sails Ltd for a while. "I really enjoy working here. David has been really supportive and has helped me stay focused on learning the skills I need for a career in the sailmaking industry."

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MITO NEWS

MARCH / APRIL 2008

The Oscars of the Motoring World

It is difficult finding the perfect vehicle, but that's exactly what seven judges did at the prestigious 2008 AA Motoring Excellence Awards.

This year a record 89 vehicles vied for top spot in 13 categories, including best small, medium and large cars, as well as best luxury, environmental and performance cars. It's the first time MITO has sponsored the all-important Safe Car Award, a prize given to the vehicle that scores the highest in the Australian New Car Assessment Programme (ANCAP) and Euro (NCAP) crash testing scheme for occupant and pedestrian safety.

This year, the Safe Car Award was won by the Subaru Impreza 2.0R. "The Subaru Impreza 2.0R, valued at \$26,990, scored a maximum five stars for occupant safety and is the first vehicle to achieve a maximum four stars for pedestrian protection," says Stella Stocks, the AA's General Manager Technical Services.

It wasn't the only award Subaru took home that night – the Subaru Impreza STI spec.R also won the Performance Car category and went on to win the Supreme Award. It's a result that Subaru New Zealand's General Manager, Chris Rickards, is justifiably proud of.



MITO Chief Executive Janet Lane presents the AA Safe Car Award to Subaru General Manager Chris Rickards.

"We are thrilled that Subaru won these three awards, but especially the Safe Car Award. The Subaru Impreza was the first compact car in the world to have the perfect 'nine star' maximum safety rating for combined occupant and pedestrian protection."

MITO's commitment to road safety was also reflected in the recent MITO Safe Driving Campaign which involved some of those most at risk of road crashes – 20 to 24 year-old MITO apprentices – offering free defensive driving courses to a pilot group of MITO apprentices, who already had their driver's licenses. The programme included a four-hour classroom tutorial and a one-hour coaching session where apprentices drove their own cars.

It's an initiative that has won praise from all sectors of the motoring industry.

Superintendent John Kelly, Road Policing Manager Waitemata, supported MITO's involvement on two fronts.

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INSIDE

Inzone Bus Rolls into Town

Inzone Bus Rolls into Town

It's big, it's state-of-the-art and it's coming to a high school near you.

It's the Inzone Experience, a mobile careers unit which travels New Zealand, helping teenagers choose a suitable vocation.

Inzone Managing Director Simon Holbrook says one of the major dilemmas facing teenagers today is which career path to choose.

Taking the bus to schools means even students in remote areas can access this valuable information, says Simon.

The bus contains custom designed audio-visual display 'pods' which screen five-minute presentations. Students can then register their interest to be sent additional information on career opportunities.

MITO is among those featured and Simon says the MITO presentation illustrates the wide range of careers available within the automotive and industrial textile fabrication industries.

By the end of this year, the Inzone message would have influenced over 40,000 secondary school students around New Zealand, including pupils at New Plymouth Boys' High where the bus travelled to at the end of March.

New Plymouth Boys' High Careers Advisor and Gateway Co-ordinator, Murray Watts, praised the MITO presentation which allowed his students to consolidate their knowledge of the automotive industry gained through the StartUp® programme (MITO's automotive programme for secondary schools).

"The Year 12 students particularly gained a lot out of the Inzone experience and, more specifically the MITO presentation, because they're at the stage where many of them haven't finalised their career choices. From that perspective, Inzone was a really useful information gathering exercise. It's via such channels as StartUp® and Inzone that the students will be able to make a smooth transition from secondary school into the workforce."



Student Tofi Nonu views the MITO 'pod'.

Continued from the cover.

"Firstly, a lot of MITO apprentices are young and this campaign is another way to get our safety message across to them. Secondly, we support any effort to make New Zealand's vehicle fleet safer. We have one of the oldest vehicle fleets in the world and by focusing on safety issues like the ANCAP ratings, MITO is highlighting ways we can make our fleet safer."

MITO's involvement also drew support from Land Transport New Zealand's Manager of Marketing, Education and Communications, Lynne Heasman.

"We are committed to reducing the road toll, so we strongly endorse any initiative which aims to do that, such as MITO's Safe Driving Campaign," says Lynne, "We also think it's fantastic that MITO is 'walking the walk' by supporting the Safe Car Award." It's a sentiment shared by Subaru New Zealand's Chris Rickards.

"MITO's sponsorship of this category reflects their demonstrated commitment to keeping apprentices safe on NZ roads. They have been well supported in this by the NZ Police, LTNZ, ACC and the Ministry of Transport. We're happy to add our voice and endorsement to these very important initiatives."

The V8 Supercars come to town

The Hamilton 400 V8 Supercars are taking to the roads of New Zealand's fourth largest city. This year MITO will again have a strong presence, both in the exhibition area and trackside, with six MITO State sponsored apprentices honing their skills at the event.

Barry Adkins, State's National Claims Services Manager, says it's the fifth year apprentices have been selected to participate in the State Smash Repair Team at the event, which takes place from 18-20 April.

"The team is made up of MITO panelbeating and refinishing apprentices from throughout New Zealand," says Barry.

"Their role will be to set up the workshop and repair any vehicles that are damaged during the first practice session on Friday 18 April."

The State Apprenticeship Scheme was recently recognised with a Judges Special Mention Award at the 2007 TVNZ/NZ Herald Sponsorships Awards held in Auckland late last year. The Scheme was also a finalist in the Best Special Projects Sponsorship Award.

"Our strategic partnership with MITO has helped us to reach this level and we're pleased to have such a supportive and robust partner on board," says Barry.



MITO has again worked closely with State to select the six apprentices who will be reporting for duty at the Hamilton event. One of those is Greg Paques, an apprentice panelbeater from Maidstone Panelbeaters Ltd in Upper Hutt.

The 20-year-old claims he's "been a V8 enthusiast from an early age" and is thrilled at the chance to get up close and personal with the streetcars.

"We'll be working from 7.30am to 8.30pm and it'll be great to learn how to work at speed and to tight deadlines. If we get to watch some of the event then that's a bonus, but I'm just stoked to have this opportunity."

Keep an eye out for the MITO exhibition stand and the State Smash Repair Team at the Hamilton 400 V8 Supercars from 18-20 April.

**Look out for MITO
at the Hamilton 400 V8 Supercars!**

18th-20th April 2008

visit www.v8supercar.co.nz for more information.