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# SOUTH ISLAND FORMULA FORD

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From the Pits - Members musings

## Spinning – Tips for beginners

Derek Wilson

The only difference between novices and veterans when it comes to spinning is that it is still a novelty for novices and they may do a few more.

The standard driving instructor advice for spinning is to, as the car spins, get on the brakes and clutch and hope like hell. Personally I like to get busy on the steering wheel in the first instance. Look at it this way; if nothing is hit then credit can be claimed for controlling the situation (pretty important when the crew is about to vacuum out the car) and if contact is made with the wall, well you did everything you could! In reality most of the time off-track excursions end up in one of the many shingle traps that all circuits have these days.

Now most of us have seen a few V8 Super Cars negotiate them, even the odd F1 car, but a Formula Ford just doesn't cut the mustard. Don't get me wrong though, we are race drivers so we have to have a go. Hopes are often raised when, after the first 6000rpm stab of the throttle, the car moves a few centimetres. This only encourages another 10 attempts until the futility of the situation sinks in, which is just as well because by this stage the organisers will be getting a bit fed-up with seeing their precious shingle spread far and wide. Mind you, some drivers drive into the shingle in order to avoid an accident, and no they don't come from Ireland. I call this the Phil Foulkes option, and it works because he damned near wore out my vacuum cleaner rectifying the consequences!

The worst stuff by far to get into is at Teretonga. Those thrifty Scotty types I'm sure just screen some very handy beach shingle, and man does it stop a car. Speaking from experience it works in two ways. What goes under the car seems to suck it down, and the remainder comes over the top and lands in the cockpit, thereby weighing it down. Under these circumstances the motor has stalled and if you want to burn up your brownie points with your crew, try starting it. I did, several times. All that is achieved is that the ring gear, which is exposed on the underside of the bellhousing, acts as a pump and jams more shingle and sand into the bellhousing on top of what is already there. No names mentioned, but a crew can get a bit grumpy about that. If I'm asked about this the next time, I think I'll just tell lies ...



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