



RF94 Stealth Rebuild - The first of a series of articles

Russ Noble

Part One. The Problem.

Formula Ford is a great racing class but, as with anything, occasionally if something can go wrong it will go wrong and that happened recently with my newly acquired Stealth when an unusual incident at moderately high speed resulted in heavy contact with a solid object. This did absolutely no good for the car which incurred severe damage to all four corners and some of the bodywork. Fortunately these Formula Ford chassis are very strong and the compulsory safety gear ensured the driver, as is usual in these crash situations, was well protected.



On the recovery truck

Upon cursory inspection of the chassis it appeared to have come through unscathed, however a lot of the components in twenty year old cars suffer from general tiredness and deferred maintenance issues and this car was no exception so a decision was made to take the opportunity and strip it back to the bare chassis and check it out thoroughly. Once stripped all components could then be properly examined and refurbished as necessary and it would then all be reassembled as good as new.



Chassis as stripped down

The South Island Formula Ford community will always rally round with assistance in times of need and I have been extremely fortunate in having Mark Collins enthusiastically working alongside me and steering me in the right direction with the rebuild. Mark has a wealth of experience and has successfully engineered at the very top level in the NZFF Championship in recent years. He is renowned for his meticulous

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preparation and attention to detail. In fact early last season Mark had to undertake a similar crash rebuild on his RF91 Van Diemen, driven by his son Michael, and this was actually much worse than my Stealth having additionally broken the bell housing and damaged the chassis. It is to Mark's credit that three weeks after the crash Michael then went out in the rebuilt car and won the very next race in the championship!



Michael in RF91 beats the Mygales

Which just goes to show that a properly engineered 20 year old car in the right hands can run at the front and take wins from the latest Mygales etc.

Fortunately my chassis was neither twisted nor bent but we have decided to weld up all the rivet holes on the underside before blasting and powder coating the chassis and fitting a new stainless under-tray. We are doing this work right now.

[Russ Noble](#)

[Part two and subsequent postings will contain further reports of this rebuild as work progresses.](#)