

# Because we can

By JAEDENE HUDSON

**N**early 30 years separate them but both Teigan Butchers and Lynne Champion have been bitten by the motorsport bug. The pair join a small list of women who compete in the male dominated sport. And, both are proving to be competitive with their male opposition.

Butchers started racing at 17 in a Datsun 1600 in super sprints and broke two lap records at Oran Park in her first year. She has won the Ladies Champion and Rookie of the Year prizes and competes in a Datsun in the Improved Production category.

Champion, 51, is only in her second year of competition and finished second last year in the production category of the Procar Championship in her class. She now competes in a Mitsubishi Evolution VIII Lancer in the Australian Performance Car Championship and after three rounds in the Championship and she's ranked 17th. "I thought that I would be last the whole year. But it is three rounds down and we've had no problems and I am 17th," she says.

Butchers is also trying to work her way up the ranks and Formula 4000 is top of the list.

The exercise science student has been testing in the Formula class but money is an issue. "I really want to get into Formula Ford, but it is really expensive. To rent a car is \$6000 a round," she says.

"But I know that I am competitive and I know that I can do the job. I guess my goal would be to compete at a national level and be competitive."

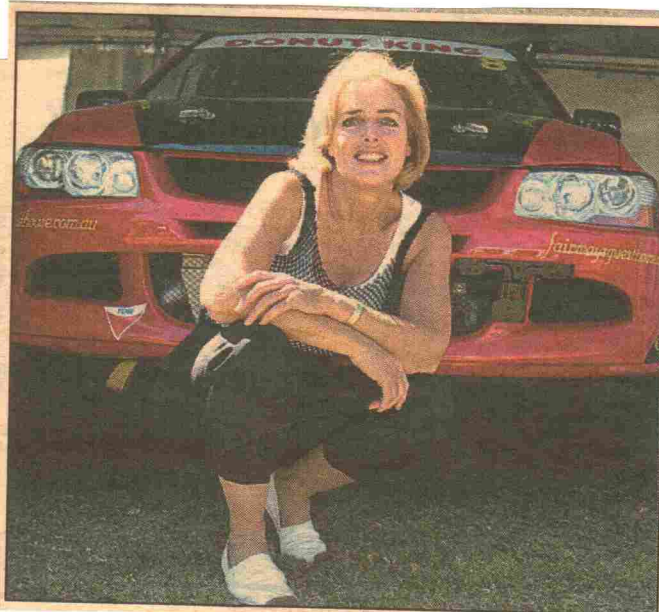
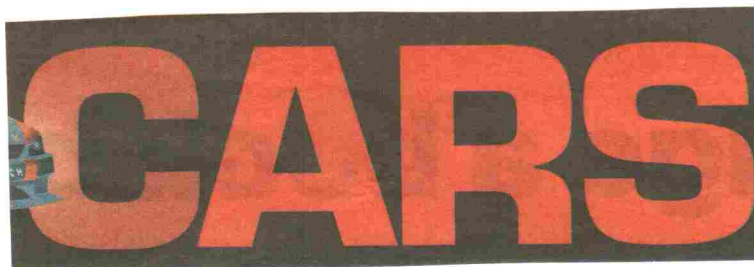
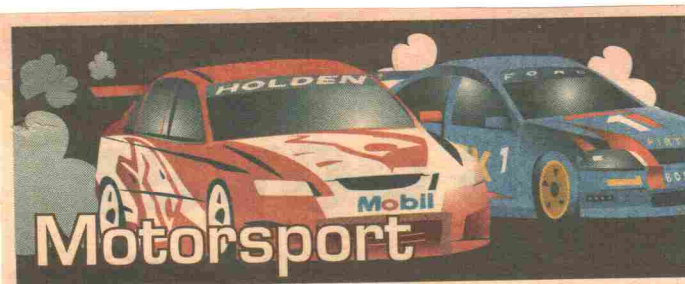
Champion is a celebrity chef and entrepreneur who runs the Fairways Guesthouse and three Excessories stores in Victoria. She made it to the grand finals of the MasterChef USA cook-off in New York and her passion for motor racing matches her flair in the kitchen. "It became a bit of a joke that this was the only thing I had not done," she laughs.

Champion's aim for the year is to race consistently and next year hopes for some podium finishes.

Both Butchers and Champion are two more women trying to make a name for themselves in motorsport. They join other fast femmes including Danica Patrick, who recently placed fourth at the Indy 500, took Top Rookie honours and became the first woman to lead a lap at the Indy 500.

Aussie chicks battling it out include Leanne Ferrier-Tander who won her class in last year's Procar Championship, has had a stint in V8 Supercars and is competing in part of the Australian Formula 3 Championship this year. And 18-year-old Lauren Gray is aboard a Toyota Echo in the Production Car Championship this year recently recording 8th outright at Mallala.

Butchers' car will be part of the Shell Optimax Motor sport display at MotorEx on July 2 and 3 at Homebush. Many categories of motor racing will be exhibited including Formula Vee, V8 Supercars, Nations Cup, GT and rally cars.



**Butchers and a baker:** Teigan Butchers (above) with her Datsun race car and Lynne Champion (left) with her Mitsubishi Evolution VIII Lancer. Champion is also a famous chef