Pure passion drives Hodge

MOTORSPORT superstar Marcos Ambrose will headline the inaugural Red CentreNATS to be held in Alice Springs this weekend.

Ambrose has done almost there is to do behind the wheel – winning two V8 Supercar championships and driving in the US NASCAR events. Simply put, there is not much that can get Ambrose’s blood racing.

But he is nevertheless thrilled to be in Central Australia as an ambassador for the first Red CentreNATS that revs into action today.

The motorsport superstar will be among the big horsepower cars that will be all revved up to perform and be on show.

Fellow V8 driver Jason Bright is also an ambassador for the event.

Ambrose will be attending key events including the Street Parade, the Rock ‘n’ Rollumble concert and the feature Burnout Masters.

“Since coming home from the USA, I have really enjoyed getting around the country and speaking to car and race fans,” Ambrose said. “Red CentreNATS really looks like being one hell of an event.

There is such a fantastic car culture here in Australia and to hold this event in the Alice should be a really great event. The first Red CentreNATS to be held in Alice Springs really looks like part of the event”. After all, the territory has been embraced by Centralians.

Red CentreNATS will join established events such as the V8 Supercars and the Finke Desert Race that will bring a boost to the NT economy.

Marcos ready to mingle

He joked about whether he would get into a burnout car but said he is looking forward to mingling with fans.

“I am going to a lot of the events during the weekend and I’m sure will have a great time with the fans,” he said with a smile.

“Not sure if they will get me on a burnout car though.”

The Territory Government has invested $1 million into the event and has allocated a multi-million-dollar package of sports infrastructure spending across the Territory, including expansions and upgrades for the Alice Springs Inland Dragway and the Central Australia Drag Racing Association.

It is just another huge motorsport event which will sit alongside established motorsport competitions that has been embraced by Centralians.

Nick Kossatch

REDCENTRENAWS

CRAIG Hodge has just put the finishing touches to his beloved 1974 Holden ute in readiness for the Show N Shine section of the Red CentreNATS over the weekend.

“I got the car from my father and he passed away after starting working on the car, but he never finished it,” Hodge said of his intent to finish off a project in honour of his late father.

“Obviously it has been a slow process but the urgency was to put it on for this event.”

This meant spending time at the panel shop where the car was resprayed and a new engine along with transmission was put into the ute.

It is simply what car-lovers do and hundreds of them will be doing exactly the same thing as NATS draws near.

“I probably put $20,000 into it and possibly more... I’m a car person and have always been into it,” Centralian Motor employee Hodge said.

Another generation of Hodge will be in the passenger seat during show and shine.

“My 16-year-old son Kieran just got his learners and he’ll be my passenger,” Hodge said.

He will join Darwin’s Dave Carter who’ll parade his 1970 Ford XW GT/HO Phase II and Darwin’s Ford nut Tim Bryan who will have several of his cars on show.

Centralian Malachi McMurray hopes to turn heads with his 2003 VY Commodore.

“I am also working on getting the Commodore set up to cruise during the event and I might even drive it to work,” McMurray said.