

Jacob Bellamy

By Richard Hobo Photos by Geoff Ridder & Peter Stewart



The original Type 986 Boxster is a car known to divide opinion. It was a bold design for Porsche in the late nineties to go back to a lower-cost, mid-engine platform, harking back to cars like the 550, 904 and 914. Fortunately, enough people liked it to make it an instant (and continuing) sales success.

One of the design's detractors has actually found a good measure of success being at the wheel of an early Boxster. He's sixteen-year-old Taranaki racing driver, Jacob Bellamy.

"I just didn't like the look of them at all," says Jacob. "I'd seen them around and I'd seen Dad eyeing them up, but I was like, 'Please, no dad, don't make me drive one of those, they just look weird.' But since getting into them, I really like them now."

Jacob followed the traditional path to motor racing by starting out on his local go-kart track where he did very well; a little too well in fact, as it was soon decided that his talent exceeded the local club level and that he should venture a bit further afield.



Jacob with his Dad

"Our first karting experience outside Taranaki was down in Wellington and that was incredibly nerve-wracking," explains dad Brendon. "It was all so much bigger and really, we didn't have a clue. We'd left ourselves with no time to practice and we were running an old kart."

Purchased as a race-prepared car in left-hand drive, the humble Boxster has been instrumental in furthering Jacob's career after coming up through the ranks in go karts and as

a scholarship driver in a BMW with Team Kiwi Racing. Going from a front-engine rear drive car to a mid-engine car did take some getting used to, but Jacob soon adapted and started to move up the field.

The decision to get into a left-hand drive car was all about Jacob's future driving ambitions.

"The next step for Jacob will be the Porsche GT3 cup cars, probably in Europe and as they're all left hand drive. He'll already be used to that

set-up having driven his left-hand drive Boxster."

"Those Cup Cars are just amazing, even when I'm out on the track in my Boxster and they come roaring up behind me, very quickly and then they're gone again just as quickly. Racing one would be a huge goal for me," says Jacob

As well as mum and dad, Jacob has had great support from various people in the Porsche racing world, especially team boss Max Schlegel, who has previously managed various motor racing teams, including V8 supercars in New Zealand and Australia.

"I've learnt so much from Max," says Jacob, "both on and off the track. He's always keen to work on strategies and give me advice on what to try."

"One thing Max has said about Jacob is that he's always willing to try new ideas and most importantly, when he's given an instruction, he actually does what he's told," says Brendon, proudly.

"He still keeps me grounded though," says Jacob. "If I make a mistake out on the track, I know I'll hear all about it when I get back into the pits at the end of the race."



Jacob with Scarlett Wood from New Zealand Sotheby's International Realty

Life as a racing driver is not lived solely behind the wheel. There is also time in front of the camera to consider and Jacob has had media training from sports commentator Stephen McIvor. Jacob and Brendon point out that they have met some great people in the racing world, right from the early days of karting.

"We've met some amazing people and made some great friends over the years, but ultimately, everyone wants the spot on the top of the hill. It's all very competitive," says Brendon.

Jacob's talent and commitment help him attract sponsors as he and his father look to

the next step in his career. At the PCNZ Annual Awards Dinner in March 2025, Jacob was awarded Rookie of the Year, as well as overall National Champion in the 2.5 litre Class of the Pirelli Porsche Racing Championship.

"One thing that's quite consistent with everyone who meets Jacob is that they can't believe how young he is and how fast he is," says Brendon. "All we need to do now is carry on that drive through to the GT3 Cup cars and then onwards from there."

"I'm just happy to drive anything fast," said Jacob.