



Western Leader car wins derby



Speed racer: Hobsonville Primary School's Campbell Harrop speeds along the course on his way to victory.

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Just like the top four finish by Formula One teams McLaren and Red Bull-Renault in the Australian Grand Prix over the weekend two west Auckland schools competed in a nail-biting finish at the west Auckland Soapbox Derby.

The annual event organised by the Waitakere Rotary Club at Westgate Drive in Massey saw Hobsonville Primary School and Whenuapai School fighting it out for victory.

Hobsonville's Campbell

Harrop, whose car was sponsored by the Western Leader, took line honours in 26.134 seconds.

He was just 0.015 of a second ahead of Whenuapai's Ethan Van Vugt.

Fellow Whenuapai pupil James Anderson came third while Hobsonville teammate Aaron Jackson finished fourth.

Riverhead Scouts Fairlane Welsh was fifth and Bruce McLaren Intermediate's George Prinsloo took sixth position.

The top six now qualify for the national soapbox derby event to be held in east Auckland on April 1.

Organiser Heather Pattison says the day went well and had a fun family atmosphere as hundreds turned up to watch the racing.

"The passion shown by the kids and parents was fantastic," she says. "And with the result you could probably race the top 12 drivers three times and get a different result each time because it was just that close."



Champ: To the victor go the spoils as Campbell Harrop celebrates with a new Xbox 360.



Pit lane: Some of the soapbox cars receive a bit of work before race time.



Whoops: Henderson Intermediate School's Josiah Brown crashes into a barrier during the race.



Long track: A Henderson Intermediate driver heads down the Westgate Drive route.

Photos: TERRI PATTISON



Helping out: Volunteers Don and Toni Alexander keep check of the times at the Waitakere Rotary Club's Soapbox Derby.



Neck and neck: Bruce McLaren Intermediate, left, and Hobsonville Primary School begin their downhill race in Massey.