



FROM LEFT: Brian, Campbell and Fiona Murdoch

## Winner - EROAD NZ Young Truck Driver of the Year 2015

# Campbell Murdoch

Story and photos by John Heron

A little south of New Zealand's iconic Tui Brewery at Mangatainoka, in a tranquil country setting just off State Highway 2 sits the family owned company of Murdoch Transport Ltd. We went there looking for 19 year old Campbell Murdoch.

After meeting Campbell we were introduced to mum Fiona who is the tea lady, and in her spare time does the books, answers the phone, organises the drivers and the freight that has to be shifted, along with anything else that has to be done around the yard. We were then taken to the shed to meet Campbell's dad Brian, and several of their customers on a rainy Saturday morning. It was not long before there was a shout from Fiona on the verandah calling us to come for coffee and cake.

After morning tea we sat with Campbell who told us that his dad drives the Hino eight-wheeler with a four-axle trailer, while Danial Wall drives the eight-wheeler Isuzu, also with a four-axle trailer. Campbell currently drives the four-wheeler Hino.

A testimony to Campbell's ability behind the wheel is his recent success at the RTF Region 3 driving competition held at Manfeild Park in Feilding, where he won both the Class 2 and driver under 25 divisions. Campbell then went to Christchurch to compete in the national finals held in conjunction with the RTF Annual Conference at Wigram, where he collected the top prize, again winning national Class 2 and Under 25 Years Old divisions.

Campbell is a young man who knows where he is going, and as Brian told us, "he was driving trucks as soon as his feet could reach the pedals". During his high school holidays, his school mates were lying in bed while he was getting up at 4am and going off with dad in the truck each day.

Campbell now drives the Hino four-wheeler, collecting and delivering stock around the area. Once that is done for the day, it is off with the crate and on with the sides to cart anything from fertiliser to metal or hay. There is never any time to sit around as Fiona keeps him busy.

Campbell says the main reason for his success is because his dad is such a great teacher, giving him the encouragement to 'have a go'. Campbell's aim is to have his own truck and trailer, and to keep the 12 year old Murdoch transport company going for many more years to come.

The Murdochs are a long established family in the district, with Brian having driven for Gleeson Transport just up the road for some 25 years before becoming an owner driver and setting up his own business. The fleet covers most of the southern North Island but they prefer to stay close to their customer base.

Just like a lot of other truckers, Brian enjoys restoring old trucks and has an old International 3070 that he takes away on classic truck runs. He also restores old International tractors and Campbell has just finished his first tractor, an International 276 McCormick.

When we asked Brian about the future of the transport industry and its problems, his first comment was compliance and keeping up with all the new rules. Secondly, he said he would like to add another truck to his fleet, but it is too hard to get good drivers, even in small country towns. The lengthy process required to attain all the necessary licences is often a deterrent for would-be drivers. □