



Round 2 – April 2008 - V8 Supercars Fujitsu Series

Wakefield Park NSW

Dust & Damage

This weekend proved to be the toughest and worst round I have ever had. Coming off a six week break and with no test days in between meant it was still only my third time ever in a V8 Supercar.

Wakefield Park is located in Goulburn NSW and is somewhat of a goat track, a lap only takes a minute and the track is not designed for large V8 cars but smaller sprint cars. The first few sessions in the car was just getting used to it again, gear changes, braking and seat position. I also had a new seat put in the car as the old one at Clipsal was so big I was moving around too much. I was still cramping in the right leg until we padded the seat with foam.

Qualifying was a challenge with the track being very small, traffic makes it very difficult to get a clean lap. Unfortunately I had a tyre puncture in the middle of the session which forced me to go back and get new tyres put on and I didn't go any faster when I went back out.

The plan for Race one was to simply pick up a few spots and keep the car on the track with no damage. I started in 28th position and managed to finish 23rd which was a great start for me.

In Race two Dale Wood - my team mate, squeezed me out in turn one and took off my driver side mirror. I spent the rest of the race talking on the radio to my team manager asking him to remind me of who was on my right since you can't turn your head once belted in and see much without the mirror. Five laps from the end I passed a car down the straight and he attempted to switch back on me up the inside at the next corner and spun me around. There was no damage but plenty of dust and I lost many spots. As a result I lost ground and was lapped two laps from the end under a safety car. On the restart on the final lap I had a brain snap and ran off the end of the straight braking too late and lightly touching the tyre wall. No damage but plenty of action and all the work done making up places was lost finishing back in 26th.

Race three was a 35 lap race and we had a minutes silence on the start grid in honour of Ashley Cooper who passed away at Clipsal 500.



COMMONWEALTHMOTORS



MotorOne



Race three started with Dale Wood being punted off the track on the straight on lap one and throwing dust up onto the track. This caused another car to be turned around at turn one and more dust which made visibility so bad that 20 cars went into turn one at 220km/hour blind. I could not see any cars in front, behind or beside me. I ended up in turn one slamming into two cars, then Grant Denyer slammed into me from behind and the result was 11 cars damaged and stuck on turn one in all directions. None of us could go anywhere. The race was red flagged and tow trucks came out to clean up the damage.

My car had rear end, front end and side damage. Luckily it was mainly the panels, but I wasn't able to restart the race. It was very dangerous with the dust and the track organisers didn't do anything to help the situation. Watering the side of the track would have avoided many of the incidents on the weekend.

My team worked until 3am that night to get the car ready for a test day which was on at Winton on Tuesday the following week, since we are grouped with Tasman Motorsport we have to test with them on the same day. Luckily my car was repaired and ready to go in time.

The Next round is at Sandown in Melbourne on June 6th- 8th, hopefully the result will be much better.



Hope to see you all there!

James Bergmuller

