



PAYCE MOTORSPORT

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PAYCE backed cars and teams enjoy huge success at Phillip Island

PAYCE backed cars and teams enjoyed one of the best rounds of the 2015 season at Phillip Island, taking out a series championship, nine podiums, four poles and a new lap record in the course of the action-packed weekend of V8 Supercars and Touring Car Masters racing.

The penultimate round of V8 Supercars got underway with practices on Friday in dismal wet conditions while Sydneysiders sweltered in above 40 degree temperatures. The GRM team took the time to set the Volvo Polestar S60s up and recorded times that were mid-field. The results were not indicative of the team's capabilities and it was not until Saturday with improved weather conditions that any serious times could be put down.

The first practice session on Saturday saw Scott McLaughlin record third fastest time, while David Wall was 25th. Qualifying for races 1 and 2 followed later and McLaughlin posted 2nd fastest in Q1 with Wall 20th. Then in Q2, McLaughlin blitzed the field in a last minute run before the window closed to record the fastest lap, which gave him his fifth pole for the season and equal second in the number of poles in the season for any driver. David qualified with another 20th in Q2.

The first sprint race of the day had McLaughlin on the front of the grid in second spot and after a slight hesitation when the flag fell he dropped into third spot at the first corner and chased the two leaders, with the remainder of the race relatively uneventful for the three front runners. Meanwhile, Wall had a more challenging race in the pack and after a few skirmishes finished in 23rd position. Race 2 saw McLaughlin in the coveted number one position on the grid and although he made a better start than in the earlier race, he slotted into second position at turn 1 and again drove a great race to keep his position intact to the chequered flag. Wall also pushed on in the second half of the pack but found it hard to break through finishing 23rd.

Sunday's program got underway with a short practice then qualifying for the 200 kilometres race. McLaughlin moved around in the top 5 and finally finished with a 4th fastest, while Wall started 25th.

As the final race of the round got underway, McLaughlin made a strong start from the second row and before long found himself in the lead as the first lot of pit stop strategies came into play. Unfortunately, his release from his second pit stop was delayed and he had to surrender the lead as he exited the pits and was just beaten into the first corner. From there he continued to push the leader hard in the hope of a mistake, but in the end had to settle for another second place and a third podium for the round.

As McLaughlin said: "I got an awesome start for once and got up the outside of a couple of guys and then was able to jump the leader in the first stop to take over the lead.

“In the second stop, I had to wait for another incoming car to pass our pit and could not hold off Lowndes for the lead as he came into view on the straight as I exited,” he said.

“Overall, an awesome day and it is good to have some proper pace.”

PAYCE Managing Director Brian Boyd said: “Congratulations to Garry Rogers and the Wilson Security Racing GRM (Volvo Polestar Racing) team for its great results over the weekend.

“Scotty pulled another one out of the bag with his last minute pole in qualifying on Saturday and then to finish the meet with three podiums was in his words ‘awesome’,” he said.

“David Wall also drove extremely well throughout the weekend and it is so hard to get through the pack when everyone is so competitive and there is little separating the times of all the cars. His perseverance was rewarded on Sunday when strategies worked in his favour together with ‘heady’ driving resulted in him moving up eight positions from the start to finish in a credible 15th place.

“The team looks to have shaken off the bad luck that impacted them earlier in the season and the cars have great pace again. The team is working well strategically, so another good result is on the cards when they take to the Homebush track in two weeks’ time.”

The three podiums for McLaughlin put him in eighth spot in the championship which is a major improvement on where he was mid-season.

Wall enjoyed his best result of the season, climbing eight positions from the grid to finish a well-deserved 15th after he drove a sensible but strong race among the pack.

“Finally something that was a bit better,” he said. “The car was great in the race and we looked after the tyres well. A good strategy and a big thanks to the team for their efforts.”

The V8 Supercars now go to Homebush on 4-6 December to wrap up the season and hopefully get that elusive win for the Wilson Security GRM (Volvo Polestar) team.

In the Touring Car Masters races, both John Bowe in the #18 Torana SLR5000 and Steve Johnson in the #17 PAYCE Mustang had great successes in the final round of the championship, with Bowe winning two races to Johnson’s one and Bowe setting a new lap record along the way. The two dominated in each of the races, with one followed the other over the line, repeating a similar story and result to that at Bathurst in October. Seeing both drivers with three podiums each was a fantastic result.

As a result of Bowe’s placings he has won the Pro Master category in this year’s championship even though he missed a number of meetings earlier in the year. Johnson also finished the season on a high even though he too missed some rounds starting later in the season when the drive in Mustang Sally was offered.

Brian Boyd said: “Overall, a great Phillip Island meeting for our teams and congratulations to John Bowe on winning the TCM championship after missing some rounds. Both he and Steve Johnson have had a fantastic season and we are very pleased and proud to have played a part in their successes.

“There is no doubt the Touring Car Masters is a great category and much loved by the fans for its entertainment value and professional approach to the preparation of the cars and the quality of drivers,” he said.

“Both the Torana SLR5000 and the PAYCE Mustang are favourites with the crowd and JB and Steve always deliver 100 per cent when on the track.”

John Bowe thanked sponsors PAYCE and Wilson Security for helping achieve the team’s goal of winning the TCM in an Aussie car.

“I can’t say enough for the performance and competitiveness of Stevie Johnson in Mustang Sally. He is an all-round ace,” he said.

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