

# RICHARDS TEAM *MOTORSPORT*

Hi all,

And welcome to a new and exciting season of NZV8 racing. As you might have noticed we are still building up the team and sorting all the tasks that need to be taken care off, that's why this update is a little late but we will try to keep you up to date from the track from now on. If you don't want to be included or if we should use another e-mail address please let us know.

So after a year on the sideline Clark is back, the Metalman business is back on track to cope with the current economic climate and by combining Metalman Motorsport with Richards Team Motorsport there was just enough budget to start another season of racing. Many of you pitched in so we could cover the major expense of an on-board camera but this guarantees some good TV time.

The car is a bit busy with all those names but the car certainly stands out in the field. Basically the car is similar to the one Kayne Scott won the championship with last year and the engine is from the Tony Marsh who also build Johnny Mac's engines, the best of both worlds really and in pre-season testing the car showed to be a good step up from the previous cars Clark raced in.

So the actual weekend then, it did not start off too well, with Clark finishing the Targa the weekend before and the rules not allowing us to test on the Pukekohe track in the week before the race we had to skip a shake-down test after the car was rebuild for the season. All the pre-season testing was done with all the components that had been used last season without any problems, so we know the car will be very reliable once all the niggles are sorted. So first practice was mostly spend in the pits sorting out the cooling and ignition timing on the new engine but we still finished the session in 20th place. The second session went much smoother and Clark completed 16 laps without further problems, giving us a good understanding on how the engine, tyres and brakes are going to behave during the 12 lap races. We finished that session in 9th place with still room for further improvement in both the car and the driver.

The new time schedule for this season does not allow much time before qualifying, the first session was used to scrub in the new tyres and 14th place was enough to get to the next qualifying session. Then in his second lap Clark set his fastest time of the day for 7th place and a place in the top-10 shoot-out as per the strategic plan he went back out to get some heat into the tyres and brakes and protect the position if necessary. That meant we went out as the third car in the shootout with still plenty of temperature and pressure in the tyres, but then Clark pinched the rear brakes when coming into the hairpin and ended up giving a drifting demonstration and only setting the 9th fastest time. The data shows Clark was about 0.3 seconds faster up to that point so P6 was certainly within the possibilities. Still a top-10 start just behind Kayne Scott is a good start for the year.

The first 2 races had little action in the top-10 with Simon Richards again demonstrating that he has the widest Ford in the field and holding Clark behind him, two 8th place finishes while building experience with the car is a great start.

For the 3rd race we made some setup changes to improve the car, but a spinning car on the first lap hit Clark on the left front and the guard started to cut into the tyre losing all its tread 3 laps later. After some fast action in the pits the tyre was replaced and the guard straightened, Clark rejoined just in front of the leaders of the race but one lap down. Without much effort Clark could match the lap-times of the leaders and stay well ahead of them again showing the car has plenty of potential.

21st in the last race means we are 10th = overall for the weekend and with a lot more experience and information on the car we are looking forward to the next round in Christchurch in just over 2 weeks.

Highlights from the last day of the Targa can be viewed here:

<http://www.3news.co.nz/Targa-rally-closes-with-thrills-and-spills/tabid/317/articleID/127672/cat/265/Default.aspx>

And the NZV8 Qualifying is here:

<http://www.3news.co.nz/McIntyre-claims-pole-position/tabid/317/articleID/128673/cat/70/Default.aspx>

Kind Regards,

Ido Lelie

Team Richards Motorsport and Metalman Motorsport.