

RICHARDS TEAM *MOTORSPORT*

Hi,

Again an exciting round of the NZV8's at Taupo, a very challenging, twisty track with varying grip levels because of both the varying track temperature and the very fine volcanic dust that gets dragged onto the track by other cars. Before the weekend we had the opportunity to do some rides with another former NZV8 driver, Wade Henshaw, based on his feedback we changed the setup of the car and he coached Clark throughout the weekend on how to drive this setup. During first practice this cost a few laps for Clark to get settled in but towards the end the lap-times came down and we finished in 12th position. With some small tweaks and a lot of instructions Clark found another 1.2 seconds in the 2nd practice for P9 overall, so we are certainly working in a good direction and could again focus on getting into the top 10 qualifying.

In the first part of qualifying it took 6 laps but Clark was 8th fastest on old tyres, then we put on some fresh rubber for the second part to get into the top 10, Clark was another 0.6 seconds faster and again was 8th.

As in previous rounds the margin back to P13 was only 0.2 seconds but now we are at the sharp end. We then had to use the same tyres for the top 10 and were 0.3 seconds slower for P9 on the grid for race 1.

Race day started with a clear sky and a lot of sun on the track, so circumstances were again quickly changing with the track temperature in the morning already close to those in qualifying. Our closest rivals in the championship started p8 and p10 so it was a matter of solid finishes in the first 2 races and then get the required result in the final reverse grid race. Clark finished 11th in both races and at the start of the reversed grid race we were only 15 points of P8 in the championship. But then in the warm-up lap everything came unstuck when the diff broke and the car was stranded half way down the track. So we could only watch from the sideline in the last race and ended the championship in P11, 1 point behind...

So a mixed season but with still some good results, 5 out of 6 top 10 qualifying positions and a first race win. We learned a lot of lessons and have a clear direction to develop the car further for next year. But first there is the street race in Hamilton, again a completely different challenge. Hope to see you there,

Ido Lelie