



RACE UPDATE

FPR

FORD PERFORMANCE RACING



VICTORY FOR FPR BUT RICHO SUFFERS HEAVY SHUNT

Mark 'Frosty' Winterbottom has taken his first victory of the season thanks to an incredible fight-back from Ford Performance Racing in last weekend's Eastern Creek V8 Supercar Championship round.

The team had everything to do after qualifying 15th and 19th on Saturday, making a win in the weekend's third race a remarkable achievement.

"After qualifying, we almost booked an early flight home because we didn't think we'd be here!" said Frosty, who drives the #5 Orrcon Ford Credit FPR Falcon. "To fight back to win the way we did is something better than a win! We did a lot of work and to finish 10th, second and

first in the three races is quite an achievement; we did it with genuine speed."

The weekend's celebrations were tempered, however, after an almighty shunt for Frosty's team-mate, Steven Richards. The #6 Castrol FPR Falcon driver was

catapulted into the tyre barrier at 160kph in race three after a front-end failure in the car.

"I don't know how to measure one accident against another but this one was pretty rough; they all are when you hit the wall though," said Richo, who declared himself 100% OK after the enormous accident. "I don't have too many of them fortunately but this time there's terrible damage to the car; that's going to take a while to get fixed."

The result was particularly disappointing for Richards after he made a miraculous recovery in race two, finishing seventh despite starting 27th after a coming together with Cameron McConville in race one.



V8 POINT SCORE

1	Jamie Whincup	540
2	Rick Kelly	432
3	Lee Holdsworth	426
4	Mark Winterbottom	382
5	Will Davison	356
6	Craig Lowndes	339
7	Greg Murphy	330
8	Garth Tander	326
15	Steven Richards	251



FPR BRIEFS

All FPR's efforts are currently focussed on preparing chassis 503 for Steven Richards in time for this weekend's racing after Sunday's smash wrote-off his #6 Castrol FPR Falcon.

Mechanics and engineers are working around the clock to get the car, which won two races and scored four podiums in the hands of Mark Winterbottom last year, into shape for tomorrow's (Thursday) scrutineering.

Former World Triathlon champion and Paralympic Games competitor John Maclean said he believes V8 Supercar drivers to be 'true athletes' after a fast lap with Steven Richards at Eastern Creek. "You've got to be on the ball at all levels," said Maclean after his lap in the Castrol FPR Falcon. "To get that car around the track Richo was working really hard. You need the complete package; the skill to manoeuvre the car at great speed and the ability to be alert at the same time. These drivers are true athletes."



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More information:
LUCY PEACOCK
 03 9300 7356 or 0407 807 336
 lpeacock@fpr.com.au

NEXT V8 SUPERCAR ROUND
Australian Grand Prix
March 13th – 16th



RICHO IS 100% OK

Steven Richards was back at Ford Performance Racing's Melbourne factory on Monday – the day after his 160kph smash at Eastern Creek - inspecting his #6 Castrol FPR Falcon.

"I'm a little bit sore down the right-hand-side but apart from that, there's no drama," said Richards, who last Sunday stormed up the grid to finish 7th after starting 27th in race two. "I thought I'd have a bit of a headache this morning but I'm spot-on perfect. I suppose it's testament to how safe the cars are these days."

The 604 chassis has been declared a total write-off, with team bosses saying it would

be quicker to build a new shell after the engine was forced back through the firewall by the impact.

The Touring Car Entrants Group (TEGA) will carry out a full inspection of the damaged car before the Prodrive-run team decides whether anything can be salvaged.

"The load spread through the whole car, which is good; it's what you want it to do," said Richards. "But it means the car's unsalvageable and it puts pressure on the guys. We're a professional organisation though and there's no expectation that we won't be out at the GP this weekend."

OFFERS OF SUPPORT

Ford Performance Racing has been gladdened by several offers of assistance from fellow V8 teams after yesterday's heavy accident, which wrote-off Steven Richards' #6 Castrol FPR Falcon at Sydney's Eastern Creek.

After establishing Richo was 100% OK, the Prodrive-run team's thoughts turned to tomorrow's (Thursday) scrutineering deadline for the Australian Grand Prix package. Aware of the dilemma, several V8 teams stepped forward to offer assistance.

"It's really encouraging," said Tim Edwards, Team



Principal. "I'm sure there are not many sports with the intense competitive levels we have in V8 where you'd get such cooperative and generous participants. It's a great environment and we'd like to extend our thanks to

Britek and BJR in particular."

FPR engineers and mechanics have so far not needed to take up the generous offer. They are currently working around the clock to prepare Mark Winterbottom's 2007 car.



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