

# RACE REPORT

## Improved Production NATIONALS

9th, 10th & 11th November 2018 – The Bend Motorsport Park, SA

Race Report by Tim Riley

## WA WINS IPRA NATIONALS STATE OF ORIGIN

The Bend is really best described as awesome. That description applies to the Hotel, Reception area, Restaurant, and wow – what a track. I have never struggled so much to learn the basics, never mind the subtleties of a track. This is the story seen through the eyes of one of the eight IPRAWA competitors.



Meanwhile, the trucks and trailers were arriving. Glen Melling bought 3 cars over in the impressive Jasmat Steel rig.



There are five circuits in the complex. We raced the 2<sup>nd</sup> longest 4.95Km "International" Circuit with has 18 corners. Whoever designed this circuit did a GR8 job. Track characteristics are:

- Modern style, with wide zones that allow multiple racing lines without huge penalty, but, it's how they link together that is important.
- Uses limited topography to great effect creating some very challenging corners and complexes
- The track has very forgiving large grass runoff areas that allowed recovery from an "off" without punitive sand traps before you hit a wall. The sand traps are there, but it would need a major "off" to find them

Enough of that, what about the racing you ask? The field was huge, with about 100 cars competing in the various IPRA sub-classes.....

**BIG WIN FOR WA:**

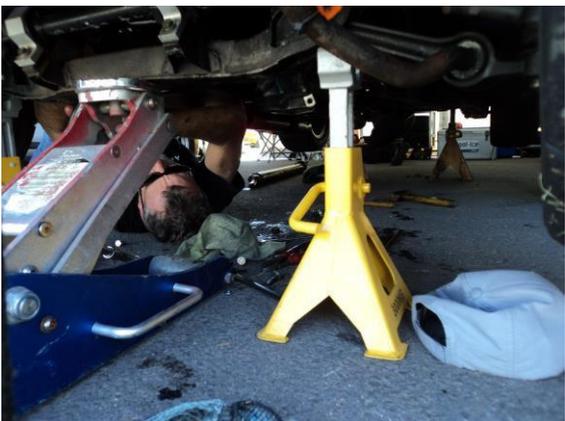
Whilst our fortunes were a bit mixed, our overall performance in the Heats & Finals secured WA a victory in the State of Origin competition. Go WA!

**ADVERSITY:**

The grit and determination of the WA competitors is perhaps best displayed by Brooke Newson's West Coast Smash Repairs team. Her WRX suffered an early engine failure. A replacement engine was found and fitted, but it too then failed. Game over.



The camaraderie in IPRA was best illustrated after Ron Coote (WA) suffered a gearbox failure. A newly balanced tail-shaft on his Escort failed in Q1. It broke the gearbox in half and did extensive damage to the bell housing and broke an engine mount..



A local competitor loaned Ron a brand new dogbox. That got Ron back out in time for Heat 1.



Here's the remarkable part of the story: The gearbox owner told Ron not to worry about removing it after the event, just to freight it back from WA where it could more conveniently be extracted.

### **UNDER 2 LITRE FINAL**

I cannot really say much about Under 2L, as I was competing in it, and could only see my bit. It was won by David Waldon (QLD) in a Mazda RX3 (a long way ahead of me). Fastest lap was a 2:09 which would have equated to about P10 in Over 3L. Awesome quick. WA was under-represented here with only Ron Coote (U2L Escort) and Tim Riley (U1,600 Corolla) coming home in 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> places respectively.

Timbo, in the U1600 Corolla had a problem. The new Pace Motorsport engine was first used a fortnight earlier, and simply drank fuel. That is not an issue when racing 20 to 25Km at our usual sprint events. However it was apparent that 30% more power had likely translated into 30% more fuel consumption. The 60Km Final was a serious issue. The answer was to test-run the four 6 lap heats on two tanks of fuel to assess the scale of the problem for the 12 Lap Final. In the Final, Riley went off hot mixing it with 2L Peugeots and Renaults for a couple of laps, before having to go into "fuel saving mode". **Notwithstanding that, Riley was quick enough to get his hands on the silverware for 2<sup>nd</sup> Place U1,600.**

### **OVER 2 LITRE REPECHARGE**

Glen Melling (WA) in the Jasmal Steel Commodore had gremlins all weekend. The dramas were overcome, but lack of points sent him to the Repechage, which he led early on, but later suffered a tyre delamination. A very sad tale.

De-laminations apparently occurred on a number of other heavy powerful cars.

Garry Edwards (WA) U3L Medina Auto Services BMW, made an ill-advised suspension change for one of his heats. This slowed his lap times and deposited him into the Repechage, where he finished 8<sup>th</sup>. He probably took a knife to a gunfight in his U3L BMW, but he had a grin bigger than Africa on his face.



### **OVER 2 LITRE FINAL**

What a race!! Favourite Ray Hislop (TAS) in a Falcon, started a little further back than one might have expected. This was due to a puncture in one of the heats that denied him vital points. Challengers were determined not to let Hislop have his 3<sup>rd</sup> consecutive Nationals Title easily. The serious challengers from WA included Matt Cherry (Monaro), John Callegari (Commodore).



Other serious contenders were Scott Cook (SA) in a Silvia and Adam Poole (SA) in another Monaro.

Adam Poole (SA) got ahead from the start followed by Matt Cherry (WA) and John Callegari (WA). The sensation was Hislop, who rose to 5<sup>th</sup> at the end of Lap 1, 2<sup>nd</sup> on Lap 2. Then in an unseen incident, he dropped to 6<sup>th</sup> and had to do it all again.

He did!!

**Results were:**

**1<sup>st</sup> Ray Hislop (TAS)**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Matt Cherry (WA)**

**3<sup>rd</sup> Scott Cook (SA)**

**4<sup>th</sup> John Callegari (WA)**

**I mention John Callegari because he had a minor issue with lapped traffic and lost the final podium spot by a mere 1/100 second after 60Km of racing.**

Talking to his father John Senior, I commented how impressive the big V8's were down the Main Straight and asked what terminal velocity was prior to braking for T1? The answer was 260kph early on, but likely now in region of 265-270kph for the Final.

Reuben Romkes (Monaro) came home in 18<sup>th</sup> Place. I suspect he (as a very young driver) will have learned a lot from this experience.

### **IN CONCLUSION**

To me, the greatest victory was our camaraderie, followed closely by WA State of Origin victory

Tim Riley

IPRAWA