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Neil's Corner



If you're a racing driver, 27 race wins across 2 seasons is a very nice set of numbers.

Dig further and consider these figures. This years V8 Supercar Championship Series involved 26 races and Jamie Whincup from Team Vodafone won 11 of them.

Impressive numbers.

In 2008 Jamie generated a win for every 2.37 races. (16 wins/38 races) In 2009 Jamie generated a win for every 2.36 races. (11 wins/26 races)

So whats the angle here?

The point is that the Sporting Rules (and some Technical rules) governing the Series changed massively this year. The race formats changed. In 2008 the Series conducted 38 races. In 2009 the Series conducted 26 races.

The FG Falcon arrived. V8 Supercars introduced the Dunlop Sprint tyre. CSR E85 ethanol fuel was introduced.

Complicated rules governing refuelling were introduced.

The Qualifying procedure changed and was different from Saturday to Sunday.

The points system was reshuffled again.

2 new tracks (Townsville & Sydney) were introduced.

In the end, no amount of fiddling did anything to alter the outcome. The hot combo Team Vodafone and Whincup equalled success and they collectively brushed off those various challenges and went on the the job of winning. Congratulations Jamie, Team Principal Roland Dane and the Team Vodafone crew. Nice work.

Looking further in the numbers this year. 7 drivers managed to win races. 11 drivers grabbed a Pole position. As the points table suggested, the drivers that offered the greatest resistance to Jamie were Garth Tander (6 wins) and Will Davison (4 wins).

It was a weird year for Ford Performance Racing (FPR), Stone Brothers Racing (SBR) and Jim Beam Racing (JBR). We expected to see more fireworks from them. Mark Winterbottom claimed just 1 win and Steven Richards had a shocker.

Now all those in the Series can take something of a pause.

However, for Team Vodafone they have to build all new Holdens. Time will tell whether that strains the boys in the lead-up to the first Round in Abu Dhabi? I suspect this will be a big task and add further stressed to a group already well worn after several "big" years.

I'm looking forward to next year's competition and I hope that FPR, SBR and JBR can put up a fight that Ford fans can be proud of.

Meantime, please drive safely this holiday season. For the benefit of you, your passengers and for other road users, rip into your nearest Pedders and make sure you get a pre-Christmas suspension safety check. It's just plain, simple common sense.

Also, cast a wary eye of scrutiny across everything on and in your car. Tyres, pressures, fluids, on board junk...

On the subject of numbers, this year's road toll and road trauma numbers are terrible. Nobody in authority knows quite why.

Theories abound but can I leave you in 2009 with this thought...

The late, and great, Frank Gardner published a book called Drive To Survive many years ago.

It's a great read and a great title. I urge you to Drive To Survive. Drive like it matters -because it does. Increasingly we think of our quiet, comfy, audio rich cars and mobile lounges. They're not!

Driving is not a time to relax put your arm up and switch off. In fact, the opposite applies.

If you drive alert and ready for all the nonsense that might come your way - you've taken a big step towards keeping yourself out of these spiralling numbers.

Take care, Merry Christmas and best wishes for 2010.



Straight advice, specialists you understand and... No Bull

