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## Shock Absorber, Steering and Suspension Specialists



### Neil's Corner



As I write this column we're one week away from a significant motorsport weekend.

The March 13/14 weekend represents the start of the domestic V8 Supercar season in Adelaide and the kick-off of the 2010 FIA World Formula One Championship in Bahrain.

I'm really looking forward to Adelaide. The Clipsal 500 is a great event that spans beyond just a car race and envelops the city with a special vibrancy.

Dating back to the Formula One race in 1985, South Australians have embraced the Adelaide Parklands events.

Apart from the high quality of the actual race events (Formula One and V8 Supercars) there's something about the parklands and the proximity of the track to the city edge. Being able to find a grassy spot in the shade to enjoy the racing with the family and friends is a key attraction.

Then when the kids or girls are over it and you've had enough, simply take a few paces from the circuit and you find sidewalk cafes, pubs, restaurants and the real world. Nice.

I've never understood why so many traditional circuit owners/operators have vigourously slashed and burned to ensure their entire circuit precincts are barren deserts?

Forcing customers to be stranded outdoors, smashed by the sun or beaten by wind and rain, with zero tree shelter and relief, is plain dumb...

I don't think the Board at Westfield are contemplating removing roofs anytime soon to enhance the customer experience? I had a lively debate once with Bob Jane about this topic. His tracks set new standards in this area. Playing spot the tree didn't take long at Calder or Adelaide International Raceway!

Anyway...

So Jamie Whincup has a perfect score this season. 4 starts 4 wins and 600 points. Alarmingly for his opponents he also has form on his side in Adelaide.

Last year it was 2 starts and 2 wins in Adelaide. Team Vodafone and in particular the pilot of car #1 look incredibly strong already.

Question is. Will this continue? Can Ford Performance Racing put a win together and will the Holden Racing Team strike back?

Pre-season testing has wound-up in preparation for the new F1 season now.

In recent years there's been a dramatic reduction in the testing days and kays. Making it even harder for the Teams, the weather in Spain in recent weeks has been poor.

The in-race refuelling ban has changed the game. Cars will now carry between 200-250 litres, an enormous amount of fuel. So the cars are all new in design and quite distinctively different to eyeball compared to last year, especially with the narrower front tyres.

Form guide? Hmmmm. The wet weather and the massive variation in fuel loads makes it hard to pinpoint pace from the Spanish test days.

So everybody is guessing on this topic. Ferrari, McLaren and Red Bull appear to be the leaders of the pack with Mercedes (formerly Brawn/Honda) close behind.

The revived BMW Sauber also seems to have speed.

Of course most of the spotlight, at least initially, will fall on Michael Schumacher. The return of the 7 time World Champion will create a media circus.

If MS does well, the light will shine on him. If MS does not do well then the light will shine on him.

An interesting sidebar to keep an eye on will be the fact that for his team mate, Nico Rosberg, this season will define his career.

If Michael belts him, then goodbye Nico! If Nico does well then his career will launch to greater heights.

Sunday March 14 is going to be a long but enjoyable day as answers begin to offset all the questions!



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

