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Neil's Corner



We're just wrapped up the first chunk of the V8 Supercar season. For the first time I can recall we're actually in series recess now until September.

I know a lot of you have a motor sport passion and therefore you know how much time and effort is invested in racing by those close to the coal-face.

The break is for 2 reasons.

1. To give the '000's of people who work in the Series a break from the 24/7 nature of the caper.
2. To distance us from the AFL calendar clashes that dog the series.

When we restart, the AFL and NRL are about to wind-down. For television audiences and track attendances - this helps.

My report card for the first half reads well.

James Courtney has excelled and it's great to see Jim Beam Racing doing so well.

Jamie Whincup and team Vodafone are a front-running fixture so no great surprise.

However, what is surprising, is the rapid adaptation the Team made from Ford to Holden.

Nobody is the dominant force.

James and Jamie, plus Garth Tander and Mark Winterbottom have all taken some of the limelight. Trying to predict who might prevail as Champion from this far out is virtually impossible.

On track behaviour has been very good too.

We've had very few messy disputes involving the umpire v everybody. Unlike previous seasons.

This year, time was taken to prepare a more detailed document about driver etiquette and what is acceptable and what is not. It appears to have worked.

Much of what gets disputed is often subjective.

We all have varying opinions on the umpire calls. The only decision I've not backed was the most recent one in relation to the contact between team mates Steven Johnson and James Courtney in Townsville.

Sporting law, rules, should apply no matter what colours you're wearing.

I had a vigorous debate with the Chairman of the Stewards, Steven Chopping after their determination to find James guilty of careless driving with no penalty.

My issue with the decision is this. If James hit Garth Tander or Jamie or anyone else in the field a penalty would have been issued instantly.

Don't misunderstand me. I like James, we're friends but these issues need to be judged correctly with no fear or favour.

Equally, James and his guys would have been squealing if they had been tagged by an opponent, turned around and had a race ruined.

The fact that it was his buddy, Steven Johnson, is irrelevant.

Ask Steve privately what he thinks about that outcome and he'll tell you straight.

In my debate we huffed and puffed our way through the incident and in the end it came down to - "this is how we've always dealt with these issues"?

The Tander/Davison Winton Turn 11 contact was cited as was the FIA Stewards decision in Formula 1 to not penalize Sebastian Vettel for his stupid move on Mark Webber.

I vehemently disagree. If it's found along normal guidelines that there's no case to answer I then fair enough.

Perhaps the Tander and Davison incident was 50/50. But the Vettel/Webber and Courtney/ Johnson incidents were about as straightforward as it gets.

The decision to let these go and turn a blind eye sends the wrong message.

The wrong message to competitors and a confusing message to our customers - you.

If we apply the Stewards rationale - then it's cool to shoot someone - so long as they are in your family!



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

