



February 6, 2007

## **SIMONSEN 'SIZZLES' AT EASTERN CREEK**

Allan Simonsen in the Consolidated Chemical Company Ferrari 360GT was the dominant force in round one of the 2007 Australian GT Championship held at the A1 GP at Eastern Creek on the week end (February 2-4).

Fastest in practice, qualifying on pole, and winning all three races made it a 'Simonsen affair', but the international ALMS Series driver who left for a test in Europe with the Pro Drive Aston Martin team straight after the race certainly didn't have it all his own way.

Exceptionally strong performances from David Wall (Porsche GT3 RSR), Bryce Washington (Porsche GT3 Cup Car), Peter Hackett (Lamborghini Diablo), Bill Pye (Porsche GT3 Cup Car) and an unlucky John Teulan (Ferrari 430) made for a great start to the year.

The result in race one was Simonsen, Wall, and Washington taking the top three positions followed by Pye and Teulan.

Hackett's Lamborghini was a non finisher, the Diablo having suffered a clutch issue in practice and then a faulty gear selector shaft in the first race.

The ex-Paul Stokell machine being driven by Hackett had not been run in anger for some two years and is only to be used awaiting the arrival of the new Gallardo model, hopefully for round two of the Championship.

An unfortunate non-starter was South Australia's Gary Dann (Porsche GT3 Cup Car) who had an off in the ultra fast turn one in qualifying resulting in heavy damage to the rear of the car.

Race two saw Washington cross the finishing line in second place a mere .03 seconds behind Simonsen, with Hackett recovering well from his first race DNF to finish in third.

The impressive Teulan finished in fourth followed by the Porsche GT3 Cup cars of Damien Flack and Bill Pye.

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David Wall's GT3 RSR Porsche failed to finish the second race suffering an upright failure, while Sven Burchartz's Porsche GT3 tore a wheel centre apart.

In race three it was Wall that took second place from Simonsen after a stirring drive off the rear off the grid, with Washington's ADRAD Porsche GT3 Cup Car in third from the menacing Lamborghini of Hackett, followed by the GT3 Cup Cars of Bill Pye, Max Twigg and Damien Flack.

The hard luck story of the race belonged to John Teulan in the Ferrari 430 who had been battling with the leaders until a split water pipe resulted in coolant spraying onto a rear tyre in the worst possible place on the track – turn one.

The damage that had been caused after the Teulan Ferrari had been tapped from behind by Pye's Porsche, was minor compared to the resulting collision with Eastern Creek's unforgiving barriers, with a repair bill of up to a \$100,000.

But with Bill Pye's best ever GT Championship result, and exceptionally strong performances from Washington, Wall, Hackett, Damien Flack, Max Twigg and Teulan plus the return of reigning champion Greg Crick (Dodge Viper GTS ACR) the 2007 GT Championship is going to be a 'battle royale' particularly as Simonsen will not be a regular competitor due to overseas driving commitments.

Round two of the 2007 Australian GT Championship is a featured event at the Clipsal 500 to be held on Adelaide's famous 3.2 kilometre street circuit from March 1-4.

### **2007 Australian GT Championship Points standing (After 1 of 8 rounds)**

- 1.Allan Simonsen (Ferrari 360 GT) 117pts
- 2.Bryce Washington (Porsche GT3 Cup Car) 88pts
- 3.Bill Pye (Porsche GT3 Cup Car) 69pts
- 4.David Wall (Porsche GT3 RSR) 64pts
- 5.Damien Flack (Porsche GT3 Cup Car) 61pts

Visit the Championship website at [www.gtchampionship.com.au](http://www.gtchampionship.com.au)