

February 20, 2010

Winterbottom leaves it late to take pole

Ford's Mark Winterbottom (Ford Performance Racing) has taken pole position for the second race of the Yas V8 400 after qualifying on Saturday afternoon in Abu Dhabi.

Winterbottom, third in yesterday's opening race of the 2010 V8 Supercar Championship Series, recorded a time of 1min 58.0370secs on the final flying lap of the 20-minute session to top the timesheets. The 28-year-old began yesterday's race in second position, but was found to have jumped the start and was forced to serve a 10-second penalty in the pits. Saturday's pole is the 13th of his career.

Joining Winterbottom on the front row will be Holden's Jamie Whincup (TeamVodafone), yesterday's race winner, while row two comprises Holden's Rick Kelly and stablemate Garth Tander, who had a spin on his final flying lap. Ford's James Courtney and Whincup's teammate Craig Lowndes rounded out the fastest six qualifiers in the 29-car field, which is made up of 19 Holdens and 10 Fords this weekend.

Rick Kelly was the early pace-setter in the session despite being the final man to complete his first timed lap, and he lowered the time to beat further with just four minutes remaining. Whincup, who was languishing in 17th in the final stages of the session after running wide on the entry to Turn 18, unleashed a lap of 1:58.2150 with two minutes remaining to go top, and his effort looked good enough for back-to-back poles at the Yas Marina Circuit until Winterbottom beat it by 0.1780secs on his fifth and final lap.

The second and final race of the Yas V8 400, to be held over 43 laps of the 4.7km Yas Marina Circuit, will take place at 6.05pm this evening.