

February 19, 2010

Dominant Whincup storms to pole in Abu Dhabi

Jamie Whincup has taken pole position for race one of the Yas V8 400 in Abu Dhabi on Friday afternoon. The 27-year-old reigning and back-to-back V8 Supercar champion, in his first weekend back at Holden after four seasons driving for Ford, secured the 13th pole of his career with a lap of 1min 58.1140secs in the top 10 shootout.

Joining Whincup on the front row for the first of two races at the Yas Marina Circuit to open the 2010 V8 Supercar Championship Series will be Holden's Garth Tander (Toll Holden Racing Team). Tander was two and a half tenths of a second down on Whincup's pole time. The second row of the grid will feature Ford's Mark Winterbottom (Ford Performance Racing) and Dick Johnson Racing's James Courtney, who turned a seventh-place finish in qualifying into fourth on the grid with a superb lap.

Holden's Will Davison (Toll Holden Racing Team), stablemate Jason Bright (Trading Post Racing), Holden's Lee Holdsworth (Fujitsu Racing/GRM), Ford's Alex Davison (Irwin Racing), teammate Shane Van Gisbergen (SP Tools Racing) and Holden's Craig Lowndes (TeamVodafone) rounded out the top 10, which featured six Holdens and four Fords from the 29-car field.

Whincup, the last man to compete in the shootout after topping qualifying earlier in the afternoon, was more than two-tenths of a second ahead of Tander after the first sector of the 4.7km circuit, and was untroubled thereafter to easily take top spot. Teammate Lowndes wasn't so fortunate, as the three-time series champion spun his car at Turn 19 when looking to be on course for a position on the first two rows. Van Gisbergen, who topped the second Thursday practice session yesterday, was another to run wide at Turn 19, and could only manage a ninth-place result.

Race one of the Yas V8 400 will be held over 43 laps of the Yas Marina Circuit at 6.05pm this evening. A second 200km race will be held at the same time on Saturday evening.