

James Philip Racing Race Report

Winton Raceway 18-20 May 2007 Ford FPV BF GT



Setting the GT up for qualifying

Testing on the Wednesday before Winton confirmed that the GT had real speed. The 2007 Performance car regulations had not been drafted to impede any particular model, but it was the FPV GT that was hit with at least 4 changes for the worst. Every positive of the Ford FPV GT needed to be explored to maintain the competitiveness of the car from the previous year.

The Pirelli control tyre was tested at Calder and proved very effective, we loaded the truck and the JPR team confidently headed of to Winton.

Practice 1 Friday.

Inclement weather days before and during the morning had everyone guessing whether to fit slicks or rain tyres; it was a pattern that followed the whole weekend. A dry period appeared and a used set of slicks were fitted. The 20 minute session was used to get a handle on the GT with its improved handling characteristics.

The track was slow and soggy due to the conditions but the GT was running great and James was starting to get his eye in.

Practice 2 Saturday.

The weather was totally unpredictable on Saturday, James said it was raining just like Winton 20 years ago when he debuted his first race car at the same circuit.

Once again the weather cleared long enough to complete Practice session 2, lap times were impressive considering the track condition and the now very second hand practice tyres.

Qualifying Saturday.

Team JPR had one shot to drag the GT up the grid. We had our allocated 6 new slicks on hand for the 20 minute session. The plan was to get the first 4 up to temperature, then set a fast lap to get the GT up the front, James did a good job on his first 3 attempts, Lap times were in the low 1:34 bracket, James was adjusting his driving style to accommodate the level of grip with the new slicks fitted. Midway through the session a pit stop was made for 2 more new tyres. The JPR team fitted them to the L/H side (the hardest working tyres at Winton) and the GT set off to go even faster. James allowed one lap to get some temperature into the new slicks and then began to punch out some highly competitive lap times.

The GT was getting faster and on his last lap James managed a lap time of 1:33.3

The JPR team was jubilant, the time was a massive 1.5 seconds better than their best times in private testing last year, and it was good enough for 5th on the grid. It was obvious the changes to the rules were going to make life very tough for FPV GT's in 2007.



On the big screen in qualifying.

Race 1 Saturday

With a start time for race 1 being almost 5pm we knew it was going to be a long day and once again the inclement weather played a big part, the track was wet, with a dry line appearing.

The JPR team's decision to fit slicks proved to be the correct one, a few competitors had fitted their rain tyres in the hope of getting an advantage if the rain stayed but it failed.

With the light fading fast the speed at which the officials cleared the circuit seemed almost comical but not for James, he was strapped in the car itching to get out and show the results of the off-season alterations to the JPR FPV GT.

With the field finally lined up with their headlights on, positioned 5th on the grid and total darkness looming James knew that he needed to make his move early. When the lights finally went out he took off reveling in the difficult conditions.

The first 2 laps saw him pass two HSV's, a GTS sedan and a GTS Coupe to be in 3rd place, the GT was handling the extreme conditions and really flying. Lap times were fast and consistent and saw James making ground on the 1st and 2nd place EVO 8 Turbo Lancers. The GT was getting faster and James had the brakes on fire hunting down the leaders but with the light well and

truly gone and the race cut short by 2 laps James and the JPR team settled for a fantastic 3rd Place and the 1st RWD vehicle home.



Brakes on fire for a very strong 3rd Place. Race 1

Race 2 Sunday

The inclement weather again had us all guessing, but it cleared once more so on went the slicks, James did his best to get them up to temperature and build up pressure for a great start. With the GT in 3rd spot on the grid he was looking forward to a great race. Unfortunately that was short lived.

When the lights went out the JPR GT made a great start but a 4wd EVO lancer turbo shot passed him on the left, then it braked and faded to the right before falling back and smashing the right rear wheel rim on our GT. The tyre deflated immediately and James had to limp the GT around to the pits for a new wheel. Under way again James drove the wheels of the GT, braking the lap record trying to make up some ground, too much time was lost with the deflated tyre and the GT would have to start from the back row for the 3rd and final feature race.



Racing to make up lost time in race 2

Race 3 Sunday

The final race of the day for Performance cars was an 18 lap event with a compulsory pit stop. Special attention was given to the tyres on the warm up laps, coming from the rear of the field meant that he would have to have his GT ready for anything on his way through the field.

When the reds went out James made a great start and was carving up the field, by the end of the first lap he was in 8th, by the end of lap 2 he was up to sixth position and still moving forward.

James was now on the tail of some of the faster outright cars and driving to put in some perfect laps to move him up the order. On lap 11 he pitted and the crew did a fantastic wheel change. The GT was back on the track and one more position was gained due to the slick stop.

Now in 5th and still driving strong James moved into 4th as one of the HSV Commodores lost a wheel on the back straight, minutes later the storming GT was up to 3rd due to another HSV receiving a pit lane drive through penalty for crossing the blend line on the pit lane exit.

In the final laps the GT's brake pedal was getting long after a big work out and the left rear tyre was fried, this made it difficult to gain time and catch the leaders as they were still 18 seconds up the road.

It was a fantastic JPR team effort to bring the GT home in third place considering we had given the front runners at least a 30 seconds head start from the rear of the grid, and having to pass the rest of the field.



Blasting through the field in race 3

The JPR GT finished equal 4th for the weekend proving all the efforts by the team had been worth while. We are now working on finding more speed from the GT.

A big thanks must go to the all the JPR team, sponsors and supporters.

Please Visit www.jpracing.net.au for more information or pictures.

Please contact Tony Hale at JPR for more information about this report or sponsorship opportunities. Ph 03 9785 3333

Please note the TV coverage from Winton will be shown during the Telecast of the V8 Super Cars from Eastern Creek on the 9th and 10th of June