



Season Wrap-Up

As another season of the Fujitsu V8 Supercar Development Series comes to a close for 2008, Gulf Western sponsored drivers and brothers David and Colin Sieders are in reflection mode, looking back over the season and taking away from it the valuable lessons learnt along the way.

The 2008 season has thrown a few curveballs at the Gulf Western team. From malfunctioning car parts to uncharacteristic driver error, the Sieders have certainly had their fair share of 'memorable moments'.

Starting off the season in Adelaide at the Clipsal 500 in February, the Sieders demonstrated the capability and potential of the Gulf Western Falcon, rocketing the car into the top 10 in qualifying.

They repeated their top 10 performance again at Wakefield in April in the final race, despite starting in 17th place and problems with the car's setup.

Sandown was more of a challenge, an off-track excursion during practice resulting in a bent right axle for David. Despite missing most of practice and consequently having an ill-prepared car, David managed to hang on to 15th place during the first race.

The next round at Queensland Raceway started off well, David making up 8 spots to finish 14th in race one. This was an impressive feat from Sieders as the team came closer to getting into the top 10 yet again. But, as it often happens in the world of motorsport, having a good driver and car is not always necessarily enough when you have to share the road with other drivers.

When fellow driver Steve Owen nudged the right rear of the Gulf Western car, Sieders was pushed off the track and down to 20th position. While he fought back vigorously and ultimately finished 17th, Sieders was forced to concede that 1) he had just lost another top 10 spot and 2) being prepared and having a good team, car and driver is not always enough in this game.

"In this sport and especially in the Development Series, you learn pretty quickly that there are just some things out of your control. Results cannot be dependant upon the driver and car alone. So many outside factors contribute to the level of success you are able to achieve" said David.

Fast forward two weeks and Winton was a bag of mixed results for the Gulf Western team. Despite being in the top 10 with lap times during race one, a broken diff eliminated David from the race.

Then came arguably the most exciting round of the season – Bathurst. The honour of competing on the famous Australian track was not lost on the Sieders, despite their CDI box (crucial in the running of an engine) malfunctioning, handing David a 'did not finish' (DNF). This was an extremely unusual and rare incident, one which the Sieders had not come across before. "I guess there's a first time for everything" said David in relation to the incident.

Bathurst was also special for David's brother Colin, with Gulf Western buying the naming rights to his Ford Falcon BA for Bathurst and Oran Park. This was a gesture from Gulf Western in recognition of his results in the 2008 season. David and Colin's cars certainly looked impressive, with identical Gulf Western livery displayed loudly across both vehicles.



2008 has certainly been a season of ups and downs, but the Gulf Western duo certainly don't look upon the season with regret. With several top 10's under their belt, the team continue to be contenders and ones to watch in 2009. In addition to the gruelling pressures of keeping themselves and their cars in shape, the team raised money for medical retrieval charity Careflight, through the sale of the Careflight V8 Supercar Bear at Bathurst this year.

Colin is an ambassador for CareFlight after being involved in a fatal incident when he was 15. The team at CareFlight saved Colin's life that day, and now the 26 year old is heavily involved in fundraising and charity work for the NRMA-sponsored organisation. He hopes that the money raised from the sale of the bears will continue to help keep the lifesaving helicopters in the sky.

"Selling the Bears, plus all other donations to CareFlight, keeps the helicopters and doctors in the sky and saving people's lives. They helped me one day and I hope they can continue to help others. It's fantastic to have so many people get behind it" said Colin.

The Gulf Western team now has one round left of the 2008 Fujitsu V8 Supercar Development Series season, taking place on December 4-7 at Oran Park.

"Looking forward to Oran Park. We are extremely quick in testing every time we go there" said David. "My goal going into the last round is to get Gulf Western on to the podium. Gulf Western deserve it with all the unwavering support they have given us" said David.

Brother Colin was in similar spirits, ready to take on the track and teams in the final 2008 round. "I think we can put up a good fight for our team and sponsors. We are definitely stronger than our results suggest".

The boys are looking to 2009 with confidence and anticipation.

"We never stop learning, never stop taking things away each time, never stop developing our skills" continued David.

The team would also like to say a big thankyou to Gulf Western who, through their generous support, have allowed the Sieders team to continue to improve and develop their team in an ever increasingly difficult and competitive sport.

"Gulf Western have been behind us 100%, I've been really happy to carry their name all year and hopefully into the future as well" finished off David.