



2009/10 Battery Town Porsche GT3 Cup Challenge - Round four: Timaru 22-24 January 2010.

Courtney Letica's weekend diary: You know the first time you achieve something you really thought was a long way off being possible? That's one way to describe the weekend's final race at Timaru's Levels raceway.

After the amazing return to racing the weekend before at Teretonga near Invercargill, Timaru became a whole new level of achievement when I won the final Porsche GT3 Cup race! Arriving late Thursday, predictions of wet and dreary weather became reality during the first of Friday's two practise sessions for the weekend's fourth round of the Battery Town Porsche GT3 Cup Challenge.

Friday practise:

Sixth fastest in the first practise was probably okay but I needed to be at least four tenths faster to be closer to my championship leading Triple X Motorsport team-mates. That's where I get benefit from the data and information sharing. Along with watching in-car video of Craig Baird, David Reynolds and Daniel Gaunt I was able to pick up on little points that I could ponder ready for qualifying on Saturday.

Saturday qualifying and race one:

Persistent rain for the Saturday qualifying made it even more difficult, but I set fifth fastest to be directly behind Daniel Gaunt for the afternoon 12-lap race.

The race itself was a real challenge and really helped my race craft. Starting well behind me, Matt Halliday got past the other cars and had me in his sights – except I had the measure of him. Lap after lap he would try to dive-bomb me but I had enough pace to be just out of his reach. But most importantly I couldn't afford to make a mistake to lose my position. With constant encouragement from my engineer on the radio, I kept my focus to stay looking ahead and not let opportunity pass to anyone following me to take the chequered flag in fifth.

Sunday race two and three:

Sunday started dry but it changed just before the race. I didn't get such a good start and Halliday who was starting beside me got the track advantage on the run to the first turn. Sure I could have hung in there, but reality is if you're racing off the drive line – and in the wet – you're not in a position to dictate!

That sixth placing put me on pole for the final 16-lap top-six reverse grid race. Again I was starting off the drive line and with Halliday behind me plus team-mates Gaunt, Reynolds and Baird, the winning odds were long.

It's amazing how much your mind shapes reality. Freeing myself of the thoughts of what could happen if I made a mistake, I got a text-book start to lead the field through the first three turns. From there I had full-control of the race and just drove like I was the only car on the track. It was a fantastic defensive game, with plenty of thanks to Peter Sprague my engineer who was on the radio to me the whole time just telling me to keep my head. It paid off in bucket loads, it certainly did.

I've now done something many have been trying for many years by winning that race – and this is just my second season. But the good news continued, with the win I finished second overall for the weekend – between Triple X Motorsport team-mates Craig Baird and Daniel Gaunt. So that's another big step forward and with three weeks until the next and penultimate race weekend for the season at Manfeild, I have still a lot to achieve. Nothing tastes sweeter than victory, so I'm looking forward to Manfeild for another weekend of success!



NEXT RACE:
Manfeild, Feilding
12-14 February 2010
Round five of six.

