



A trying day at Taupo



ORIX Leasing & Finance Holden driver, Paul Manuell, showed the potential of his newly rebuilt ORIX Commodore by qualifying in eighth position, just fractions of a second behind the similar Commodores of Andy Booth and Andrew Anderson at the opening round of the BNTV8s championship at Taupo last weekend.

However, after the start of the first race there was a fair amount of contact between the front cars as they headed into the first corner at Taupo, in which Manuell was involved, and although he finished the race in 11th position, incurred a 50 second penalty imposed by race officials, relegating him to 21st place, which is where he was required to start the second race.

Starting from almost the rear of the 32 car field made passing difficult in the extremely

competitive category but Manuell still managed to finish in fifteenth position.

Race three was a complete reverse grid start and Manuell was hopeful of a top grid position based on the result of his second race, but officials deemed that he would be further penalised by six starting positions as the advantage he had of starting near the front of the grid came as a result of the penalty imposed in the first race. Starting therefore in position 23, Manuell put in a great effort to finish provisionally 12th, despite having the gearlever knob detach for the majority of the race.

"Not the ideal start to our championship season - however we finished all the races with a virtually undamaged car, which clearly has the potential to be a consistent top five runner," said Manuell.



In-car communication a success

The ORIX team debuted the all new in-car communications system providing both video and audio communication from Manuell to guests gathered within their hospitality suite.

The 100 ORIX guests were able to observe Manuell preparing for each race, communicate with him, listen to the crews technical dialogue, then watch the entire race action from three cameras inside the car.

"Our guests were amazed at the preparation a driver goes through before a race, and then astounded at the roughness of some of the racing. It gave them a much greater understanding of what Paul goes through and what motor racing at this level is all about," said Glenn Middleton, manager of the ORIX Team. Prominent media personnel were extremely impressed with the new system which is one of its kind in New Zealand and will be featured on later television coverage of the BNT V8s.

GALLERY : TAUPO OCTOBER '08



Next Round: November 7-9 Pukekohe Park



ORIX

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