

ALL NEW GALLARDO READY FOR BATHURST 12 HOUR ASSAULT

M Motorsport/Interlloy Lamborghini Gallardo FLII GT3

2014 Liqui-Moly Bathurst 12-Hour

Mount Panorama, Bathurst (7-9 February)

12-months ago M Motorsport's Justin McMillan stood on the precipice of the biggest drive of his short motorsport career, staring down the barrel of his debut on Mount Panorama behind the wheel of one of the most ferocious GT cars in the world, the 600bhp Lamborghini Gallardo FLII.

Now, just days out from his second start at 'the mountain' McMillan admits that the emotions are different this time around - more akin to a kid in a lolly shop..

"I can't wait," he beamed reflecting on what had been a meteoric debut at the highest level of GT competition in the country last February. "Last year I wasn't sure what to expect, but this year I have a much better grasp of what I need and what the team needs."

Part of that newly acquired experience saw the addition of a fourth name to the team for 2014, with experienced V8 Supercar campaigner Dale Wood joining McMillan and his 2013 co-drivers Steven Richards and Ross Lilley.

That isn't the only new development for the Lamborghini team either, with Interlloy Engineering Steels and Alloys adorning the sides of a brand new all-carbon Reiter Engineering-prepared Gallardo FLII GT3.

"On the eve of the final round of the Australian GT Championship we sold our 2013 car, so had ordered a new FLII for this year," McMillan explained. "It's essentially identical to last year's car, but came as all carbon with a clear coat across the top, it looks incredible. Interlloy has also become our naming rights sponsor after being an associate supporter of the team last year, and we're looking forward to doing some big things with them this year.

"Adding Dale to the equation was a 'no-brainer'. For our 'young' team it's important to bring in some experience and also put less pressure on myself and Ross Lilley to have to go out and punch out laps that match the leaders. It also means less time in the car and we can rotate our drivers to suit where we are in the race.

"The expectation considering the depth of talent and experience in this year's field is a top five finish. If we can improve on that, great, but we want to improve on where we were last year, which if not for a minor part-failure which cost us valuable time in the pits, would have had us well inside the top ten."

"Justin's right," Steven Richards agreed. "This is a young team experience-wise, but there are some wise heads amongst the team that understand that this is a 12-hour race around one of the toughest circuits in the world."

Richards will clearly be part of that 'brains-trust', the reigning Bathurst 1000 champion is an important inclusion into the M Motorsport team again this year. He will not only join McMillan for the bulk of the Australian GT championship season, but the former V8 Supercar regular and Carrera Cup front-runner is now operating Steve Richards Motorsport from McMillan's Port Melbourne headquarters in an association that will make both operations much stronger.

"Justin has an impressive infrastructure down there," Richards explained. "I have my own Carrera Cup car to run this year, and a number of customer cars, whilst Justin has his own cars, as well as a fleet of classic and sports cars that his team maintain and prepare from Port Melbourne. I'm looking forward to the move because it gives me the space and access to broaden my business, and also assist M Motorsport with their growth."



So what of the team's chances for the forthcoming 12-Hour?

"As Justin explained, I think we're a top five car certainly, but beyond that, there are a number of factors that will come into play. The FIA have been kind to the Lamborghini since last years 12-Hour and we have a different restrictor. Last year it seemed to me to be more of a 'point and squirt' kind of car, but after our test at Phillip Island you could feel the improvement mid-corner and out of the corners. It's an incredibly well balanced car, it's brakes are fantastic and fitted with the Pirelli tyres which proved incredibly durable last year, it will be an excellent combination."

Dale Wood is no stranger to the M Motorsport team either, nor the FLII, having joined McMillan for the final round of the Australian GT Championship in New Zealand at the end of 2013.

"It's almost like driving the ultimate race car simulator," Dale Wood added with a laugh. "It's just the ultimate race car. It does everything you want a race car to do - which is almost the complete opposite of a V8 Supercar. It goes, it turns, and I can't get enough of the aero grip, it just blows me away.

"I was rapt when Justin asked me to join the team for Bathurst. I love the track, I love the car, and I really enjoy hanging out with the team, we all get along famously, we have a laugh and we enjoy being together - that's part of the battle in a situation like this with so many people involved in such a long race, I can't wait to get there to be honest."

As he had done 12-months prior, Ross Lilley returns to the wheel, joining former Victorian State Series rival McMillan once more. "We had a great run last year," Lilley admitted, "but we were probably one man short of what we needed, so with Dale's addition to the team, I'd expect we'll be more competitive, but it's Bathurst and it's 12 Hours, so anything can happen. I'll do my bit and circulate the car, and leave it to the young blokes to go out and push the leaders. The car is certainly capable of running at the front, it's the best of its breed, so we'll keep it on the black stuff and see where we end up after 12 hours."

Opening practice for the 2014 Bathurst 12-Hour will get underway at 8:55am on Friday, February 7.

2014 Bathurst Liqui-Moly Bathurst 12-Hour - Timetable;

Friday, February 7

Practice #1 (Class A-B): 8:55am (1-Hour)

Practice #2 (All Classes): 1:05pm (1-Hour)

Practice #3 (All Classes): 4:15pm (1-Hour)

Saturday, February 8

Qualifying #1 (All Classes): 9:00am (1-Hour)

Qualifying #2 (All Classes): 1:30pm (40-minutes)

Qualifying #3 (Class A): 2:20pm (15-minutes)

Sunday, February 9

Bathurst 12-Hour: 6:15am (12-Hours)

Event coverage;

- the final 3-hours of the race broadcast on SBS (3:30pm AEST, Sunday February 9)
- live webcast of the event (including commentary from Radio Le Mans)
- post-produced coverage of the event on SBS with replays on SPEED TV (Foxtel)

Keep up to date with further announcements from the M Motorsport/Interlloy race team by visiting;
www.facebook.com/MMotorsportGT3



2014 Australian GT Championship presented by Pirelli

Rnd#1 - 28-30 March, Sandown, Melbourne, Victoria
(2x 60-minute races - The Nationals)

Rnd#2 - 23-25 May, Phillip Island, Victoria
(101-lap race - The Nationals)

Rnd#3 - 4-6 July, Townsville, Queensland
(3x 40-minute races - V8 Supercars)

Rnd#4 - 22-24 August, Sydney Motorsport Park, NSW
(2x 30-minute, 1x 60-minute races - V8 Supercars)

Rnd#5 - 12-14 September, Sandown, Melbourne, Victoria
(3x 40-minute races - V8 Supercars)

Rnd#6 - 7-9 November, Highlands Motorsport Park, Cromwell, NZ
(101-lap race)

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