



Adelaide Street Circuit
 Round Two. Konica V8 Supercar Series
 20-23 March 2003

“JONES PERFORMS STRONGLY ON THE STREETS ”

SPIES HECKER



Robert Jones #69 Spies Hecker Commodore

SPIES HECKER *Racing*

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FAST FACTS

- **Jones takes 15th in difficult night conditions**
- **#69 Spies Hecker VX Commodore performs faultlessly over 40-lap distance**
- **Record crowds at S.A.'s biggest sporting event**
- **Level 1 teams' resources prove too strong**

Welcome!

The fifth running of South Australia's biggest sporting event, the Clipsal 500, saw Robert Jones put in a solid performance in trying day/night conditions to take 15th place in Friday's Konica V8 Supercar 40-lap twilight race. Against a solid contingent of (Level 1) teams that are operated, resourced and funded by some of the best V8 Supercar Championship teams in the country the Melbourne privateers were competitive in all session and the #69 Spies Hecker VX Commodore proved reliable at this demanding circuit.

The Adelaide street circuit, long the home of the Australian Grand Prix, is renowned for dishing up plenty of punishment to those whose respect wanes even for a moment. Jones drove a mature race to keep the #69



Spies Hecker VX Commodore off the concrete walls and out of harm's way.

The cream of the (Level 1) V8 Supercar Championship fields teams in the Konica V8 Supercar Series: Holden Racing Team's Young Lions (Dale Brede), and the top-placed Ford brigade of Stone Brothers Racing (Mark Winterbottom) were favourites to be at the head of the field followed by Tony Ricciardello (Dick Johnson Racing), Andrew Jones (OzeMail Racing) and Luke Youlden (Supercheap Racing). Resources aside, the experience of competing at previous Clipsal 500 events allowed them to instantly "dial-in" their cars.

With an absence of test days prior to the event the Spies Hecker Racing Team had to search for the right suspension settings to cope with the unusual rigours of this typical street circuit. But by the race's start time the team felt more comfortable than they had in the earlier sessions, especially after discovering a split hydraulic hose for the shock absorber system.



Robert Jones: "Not having raced here we had to guess how to set the car up and the earlier sessions were trial and error. We initially had a stiffer set-up but found that the car was particularly difficult in the tight sections. Street circuits always have lots of tight corners, with narrow track-width this means that the ripple strips on the corners are something that you have to disrespect: to get good lap times you have to really push the limits and ride over

the kerbs in a major way. And generally speaking the track surface was very bumpy.

"Our initial stiffer settings wanted to spit the car into the walls as I rode over the kerbs. It was clear that softer settings were needed to allow the car to ride more supplely and predictably over the kerbs and undulations.

"Our first set of changes quite radically changed the way car turned-in to corners, from oversteer to understeer. In layman's terms oversteer means that the car actually responds too much when the steering wheel is turned. Understeer means that the wheels don't turn enough and the car wants to keep going straight ahead.

"Despite this I reduced my lap time by one full second over the two Practice Sessions and moved up from 16th to 13th whilst closing the gap to the leader by almost half a second. It was encouraging to make this improvement but it came from my increasing familiarity, not the car's development.

"Our improved placing put us into the split Qualifying Session for the top 50% of



of the field (based on Practice Session times) for the first time. The Qualifying Session was held late on the same day (Thursday) and we slipped down the order to 18th. As usual the competition is very closely separated: one-second faster would have moved us up to 13th: and five of the top ten places were filled by the Level 1 teams, plus last year's championship-winning team made six. So overall our result without any experience here wasn't too bad.

"Unlike other championship rounds we only

had one race, so there were no further opportunities to keep fine-tuning the car except for a warm-up session for which we fitted some seriously softer springs and shocks.

"With only one hour before the race we discovered that a hydraulic line that carries fluid for one of the shockers was split. This effectively made it inoperative and would have reduced our lap times in Qualifying. We obtained a replacement from the Lansvale Racing Team (Level 1) and performed the repair with only ten minutes to spare adding unnecessary drama.

"The starting time of 6.30pm still provided adequate daylight and looked like it would hold for most, if not all, of the race duration of around an hour.

"As the lights went green my car bogged down momentarily on the start line but got going quickly after that, and as we thundered into Turn One I had made up a couple of places.

There were cars spearing off and over the first chicane, they hadn't made allowances for their cold brakes and tyres, but carnage was avoided and the pack continued on through the first handful of tight corners.



"I held 15th place to lap 14 where I moved back to 16th. I wasn't too perturbed about fighting hard for a place or two in the early stages because I was focused on keeping

the car in good shape for the latter stages and didn't want to get tangled up in desperate lunges, but was up to 15th again by lap 26.

"Up to this point I had been constantly adjusting the front and back anti-roll bars as the car's fuel load lightened: this can be done by levers on the floor behind the gear stick.



"The race had been surprisingly devoid of accidents until lap 33 when Geoff Full's Commodore went full-bore into the concrete wall on the incredibly fast turn 8: the sweeping corner that is negotiated at over 200km/h. He hit the wall with his side and narrowed the car by about a metre. The debris necessitated a Safety Car which added two laps to the race distance, and gave me the opportunity to have my first drink. I was so busy inside the cockpit that I hadn't had time to reach for the drink bottle straw.

"Daylight was fading fast at this point and the conditions became very difficult. The car has a dashboard-mounted light that comes on when the engine revs reach the right moment for the next gear change: this is surprisingly known as the shift light.

"Not having raced at night we were unaware just how bright the shift light is: bindingly! Added to this, one of the giant viewing screens is mounted right above turn 8 and was as bright as the sun, right in your eyes as you head flat chat into the corner.

"I was in 15th at the race's resumption and held this to the chequered flag in what was a very mentally-taxing race. Racing in the dark with the shift light constantly flashing and being virtually blinded heading into the fastest and most dangerous corner took their toll. But having said that, it was a very enjoyable race with lots of dicing.

"We successfully completed the race without any vehicle damage and the car was still going strong. After one hour and six minutes of racing I was only thirteen seconds off 12th place so overall we were all pleased".

Bob Jones added: "Unfortunately I was only able to attend Thursday's sessions and had to return to Melbourne due to other commitments, so I wasn't there to lend a hand and see how the whole thing unfolded in the race. By all accounts Robbie did a great job in a tough race and came up trumps, and with the car all in one piece our workload for the next round won't be out of control".





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TELEVISION SCHEDULE 2003 Konica V8 Supercar Series

Round	Date	Circuit	Telecast Times	
			Date	Time
1	22-23 FEB 03	Wakefield Park	16 MAR 03	16:00 - 17:00
2	21-23 FEB 03	Clipsal 500, Adelaide - Support	30 MAR 03	15:30 - 17:00
3	02-04 MAY 03	Eastern Creek Raceway	11 MAY 03	14:30 - 15:30
4	05-06 JUL 03	Phillip Island Grand Prix Circuit	13 JUL 03	15:30 - 17:00
5	02-03 AUG 03	Winton Motor Raceway	10 AUG 03	15:30 - 17:00
6	30-31 AUG 03	Mallala Raceway	07 SEP 03	13:00 - 14:00
2003 Konica V8 Supercar Series Special Event				
-	09-11 OCT 03	Bob Jane T-marts 1000	12:00 - 17:00	07:00 - 17:00

Practice One							
Pos	Car	Driver	Vehicle	Laps	Fastest...Lap		Gap
1	88	Peter Gazzard	Ford Falcon AU	21	19	1:25.9846R	
2	41	Mark Winterbottom	Ford Falcon AU	20	18	1:26.023	0.038
3	12	Andrew Jones	Ford Falcon AU	19	14	1:26.541	0.556
4	64	Mark Porter	Holden Commodore VX	22	18	1:26.662	0.678
5	30	Luke Youlden	Ford Falcon AU	16	8	1:26.827	0.843
6	71	Tony Ricciardello	Ford Falcon AU	20	20	1:27.122	1.137
7	28	Matthew White	Holden Commodore VX	18	15	1:27.175	1.190
8	40	Brett Peters	Ford Falcon AU	20	13	1:27.181	1.197
9	77	Michael Simpson	Holden Commodore VS	20	14	1:27.460	1.475
10	56	Kevin Mundy	Ford Falcon AU	23	17	1:27.692	1.708
11	47	Craig Bastian	Ford Falcon AU	16	16	1:27.703	1.719
12	46	Dale Brede	Holden Commodore VX	14	9	1:27.962	1.978
13	98	Grant Elliot	Holden Commodore VS	19	14	1:28.003	2.019
14	22	Todd Wanless	Ford Falcon AU	23	21	1:28.121	2.137
15	72	Owen Kelly	Holden Commodore VT	9	5	1:28.209	2.224
16	69	Robert Jones	Holden Commodore VX	19	12	1:28.505	2.521
17	25	Terry Whyoon	Ford Falcon AU	22	22	1:28.895	2.910
18	300	Tony Evangelou	Holden Commodore VS	18	17	1:29.270	3.285
19	94	Mark Howard	Ford Falcon AU	16	12	1:29.528	3.543
20	14	Geoff Full	Holden Commodore VX	3	3	1:29.601	3.617
21	68	Shane Beikoff	Holden Commodore VS	18	18	1:29.628	3.644
22	59	Jamie Miller	Holden Commodore VX	21	16	1:29.966	3.982
23	55	Jose Fernandez	Ford Falcon AU	10	10	1:30.151	4.166
24	110	David Russell	Ford Falcon AU	12	12	1:30.183	4.199
25	49	Tim Gordon	Ford Falcon AU	17	11	1:34.606	8.622
26	87	Graham Crawford	Ford Falcon AU	9	8	1:36.457	10.473

Practice Two							
Pos	Car	Driver	Vehicle	Laps	Fastest...Lap		Gap
1	12	Andrew Jones	Ford Falcon AU	18	18	1:25.3578R	
2	72	Owen Kelly	Holden Commodore VT	20	18	1:25.3595r	0.002
3	41	Mark Winterbottom	Ford Falcon AU	19	7	1:25.4651r	0.107
4	88	Peter Gazzard	Ford Falcon AU	21	12	1:25.7367r	0.379
5	64	Mark Porter	Holden Commodore VX	18	18	1:26.001	0.644
6	30	Luke Youlden	Ford Falcon AU	19	10	1:26.156	0.798
7	46	Dale Brede	Holden Commodore VX	18	16	1:26.194	0.836
8	40	Brett Peters	Ford Falcon AU	19	16	1:26.214	0.856
9	14	Geoff Full	Holden Commodore VX	22	21	1:26.355	0.997
10	28	Matthew White	Holden Commodore VX	15	10	1:26.420	1.062
11	71	Tony Ricciardello	Ford Falcon AU	17	17	1:26.493	1.135
12	77	Michael Simpson	Holden Commodore VS	19	10	1:26.558	1.200
13	69	Robert Jones	Holden Commodore VX	20	18	1:27.521	2.163
14	55	Jose Fernandez	Ford Falcon AU	21	18	1:27.784	2.426
15	98	Grant Elliot	Holden Commodore VS	11	9	1:27.837	2.479
16	56	Kevin Mundy	Ford Falcon AU	18	10	1:27.891	2.533
17	47	Craig Bastian	Ford Falcon AU	14	9	1:28.267	2.910
18	94	Mark Howard	Ford Falcon AU	18	15	1:28.386	3.028
19	25	Terry Whyoon	Ford Falcon AU	20	16	1:28.486	3.128
20	68	Shane Beikoff	Holden Commodore VS	18	18	1:28.999	3.641
21	59	Jamie Miller	Holden Commodore VX	23	15	1:29.248	3.890
22	110	David Russell	Ford Falcon AU	18	18	1:29.635	4.278
23	87	Graham Crawford	Ford Falcon AU	23	20	1:30.817	5.459
24	49	Tim Gordon	Ford Falcon AU	21	12	1:30.976	5.619
25	35	Clyde Lawrence	Holden Commodore VS	18	18	1:31.288	5.931
	22	Todd Wanless	Ford Falcon AU				

	Position per Lap											
	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42
1st	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41	41
2nd	12	46	46	46	46	46	46	46	46	46	46	46
3rd	30	64	64	64	64	64	64	64	64	64	64	64
4th	72	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28	28
5th	46	72	72	72	72	72	72	72	72	88	88	88
6th	28	30	30	30	30	30	30	88	88	72	77	77
7th	64	40	40	40	40	40	40	77	77	77	56	56
8th	40	88	88	88	88	88	88	56	56	56	98	40
9th	88	56	77	77	77	77	77	98	98	98	55	55
10th	56	77	56	56	56	56	56	55	55	55	40	98
11th	77	98	98	98	98	98	98	40	40	40	72	72
12th	98	55	55	55	55	55	55	25	25	25	25	
13th	55	14	25	25	25	25	25	110	110	110	110	
14th	14	25	110	110	110	110	110	22	22	22	22	
15th	25	110	69	69	69	69	69	69	69	69	69	
16th	110	69	22	22	22	22	22	59	59	59	59	
17th	69	22	300	300	300	300	300	35	35	35	35	
18th	22	300	59	59	59	59	35	68	68	300	300	
19th	300	59	35	35	35	35	68	300	300	68	68	
20th	59	68	68	68	68	68	300	30	30	30	30	
21st	35	35	71	87	87	71	71	71	71	71		
22nd	68	71	87	71	71	71	87	87	87	87		
23rd	71	87	49	49	49							
24th	87	49	12									
25th	49	12										

