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April 21 2009

Media release: For immediate release to all media

Strong showing by Webling on streets of Hamilton

A last minute deal saw Stefan Webling, the MTA Formula Ford scholarship winner, driving a Toyota in the TRS Trophy races at the Hamilton Street race. Webling had just finished third in the MTA Formula Ford championship and was both surprised and very pleased to be offered the drive which would be his debut drive of a TRS car and his debut on the streets of Hamilton.

The car was to be run jointly by the Christchurch-based Lancer Racing Team and Motorsport Solutions who had run Stefan's Formula Ford in the championship. The car was checked and upgraded at the Motorsport Solutions workshops in Christchurch in the week leading up to Hamilton.

Testing was at Taupo on the Wednesday prior to Hamilton – Stefan's first drive of a wings-and-slicks racing car. However his time in the car was cut short due to fuel system problems, allowing him to have only two half-hour sessions prior to Hamilton.

At Hamilton, Stefan was a creditable fourth fastest in the Friday morning practice session, but qualifying did not go well as on the warm-up lap the new carbon fibre inlet manifold developed a leak and the car would not idle under 4,000 rpm. As a result of this failure, all of the TRS cars' manifolds were replaced prior to the first race.

Temporary repairs were carried out on Stefan's car during the first qualifying session but Webling was unable to record a time which meant he had to start from the back of the grid for the first race. Stefan managed to get on the track during the second qualifying session but as he was on cold tyres and had done only a few laps of the circuit, he could manage only a lowly 10th spot on the grid for the second race.

In the first race, starting from grid 12, Stefan dived with Kenny Smith for a lap before passing him to go on and finish sixth and set fifth fastest time, hampered by a faulty shift cutout switch which caused difficulty in gear changes. This was repaired after the race.

Race two was a similar start, but this time Stefan beat Kenny to the first corner and with Mitch Cunningham on his tail, both arrived at turn two together, Stefan locking up his brakes which allowed Mitch and Kenny to re-pass him. Stefan then had a great chase, closing on a few seasoned TRS

drivers, dicing with them and passing two of them under brakes into turn one to finish seventh and set a time in the 1.23 second bracket which only a few other drivers achieved.

“Fifth overall of the weekend was OK after such a disastrous qualifying on a circuit where a good grid position is most important. Once we got our problems sorted, I really enjoyed driving the car and can’t wait for my next racing experience in a TRS on a normal racing circuit,” said Webling.

For further information: Stefan Webling: Mob: 0274 379 549 or visit www.stefanweblingmotorsport.com

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Stefan Webling was supported by:

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Diverse Extreme team Warner construction