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Luke Ellery Wins In The Wet At Sandown

Round 4 of the Victorian Formula Ford 1600 Championship was greeted by Melbourne's finest winter weather but nothing was going to stop Luke Ellery on his mission to be on top of the podium.

The young Melbourne local showed why he is the man to beat in the championship with a strong performance over two days of racing.

In the trying conditions Ellery's focus was on consistency with the main goal to finish in the points on all races.

Ellery's weekend began with a strong practice session putting him over a second in front of his nearest rival. This form continued into the qualifying session with pole position being won despite being blocked by a spinning car on a flying lap. With a seven tenths gap between Ellery and nearest title contender, Ben Small, the racing was sure to be close.

Race one started under a threat of rain. After a poor start it didn't take long for Luke to hit the lead but with rain starting to fall a more conservative approach was taken to ensure the race win.

"I was waiting for the heavens to open and I was bringing my braking distances back just in case. The track still seemed dry so on the last 2 laps I went for it", said a relieved Ellery after taking the win.

Rain, rain, rain was the order of the day on Sunday but Luke was positive that his Spectrum chassis was well setup for the conditions.

Race two started in the pouring rain on a soaked track. After being swamped at the start due to losing traction on the painted start finish line, Luke dropped back to fourth place. With a spinner on the race line bringing out the safety car Ellery's luck was about to change. With the safety car about to pull off the circuit, an unlucky Ben Small spun allowing Luke through to focus on catching a fast starting Steve Cadden. With Cadden succumbing to the conditions and vacating the track coming onto the fast Sandown back straight this left Ellery and a hard charging Andrew Beams in his Mygale to fight out for the win.

Though Luke drove a calculated race in difficult conditions but he couldn't catch Beams having to settle for second place.

Race three was to be the day's most exciting race with the win up for grabs up until the end. Luke's aim was to be consistent and consistent he was with yet another disappointing start on a wet track. With a three way battle ensuing, Ben Small took the lead with Ellery in second position after Andrew Beams ran off on turn two. After a short safety car period the battle was on between Small and Ellery. Both showing great skills on a cold and wet track the racing was tight between the young guns. It was not until the dying seconds of the final lap that Ellery was to take the win after the pair came together on the final corner.

"I had a great battle with Ben and I was lining him up for a drag to the finish line. We both got unsettled on the exit of the corner and it resulted in a touch. I crossed the line to take the win, but definitely not the way I wanted it. It was just one of those things", said Ellery.

"Thankfully, we had video footage of the incident, which showed exactly what happened. It wasn't intentional, and neither Ben nor I could be found at fault."

With a pole position, two race wins and a second place, Luke won the round thanks to consistent and mature driving and is now leading the championship by 2 points from Andrew Beams in second and Ben Small a further two points behind in third.

Luke would like to thank his family for the ongoing support, National Metal Recyclers, Borland Racing Developments and Lerner Race Engines.

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