

Webling Maintains Second Place in Championship after Manfeild

Taranaki Formula Ford driver, Stefan Webling, had a difficult Formula Ford Championship round at the NZ Grand Prix meeting at Manfeild last weekend. After a frustrating qualifying session put him in fifth place, he was struggling in each race to get through 'the pack' to chase after his Superlux team-mate, Andre Heimgartner, but still holds second place in the championship going into the final round at Taupo next month.

In qualifying, Stefan thought he had an 'arrangement' to work with Heimgartner to achieve the best times for the Superlux duo in qualifying, but that didn't happen and Stefan qualified fifth. From then on, in the races, he was struggling to get through the 'pack' of other drivers, and chase after Heimgartner. In the first race he drove an excellent race to come through the field and finish second to Heimgartner, Stefan setting fastest lap in his chase. In the second race, Webling again worked his way through the field, to challenge for second place, but made contact with Richard Vickers and was given a drive-through penalty which relegated him to last place in the results. The third race had the Morrie Smith Memorial Trophy at stake and again Stefan had to work his way through the close field, dicing with former class champion, John Whelan, and Tim Vickers, eventually finishing in fourth place.

"A very frustrating weekend, which illustrated how important the qualifying session is for the whole meeting. The performance of the top group of drivers is so close that unless you start at the front, you become embroiled in a close wheel-to-wheel fight to get into clear air when you can then use your own pace to set some good lap times. What was satisfying was I set the fastest lap in all three races. Our Superlux team will be having a test session prior to the Taupo meeting when we plan to iron out my problems in qualifying," said Webling who still has a chance of winning the championship.

Points: Heimgartner 974, Webling 865, Whelan 835, T Vickers 798, Williams 688, Thomas-Kircher 668, R Vickers 609.

Next and final round: March 12-13 Taupo Motorsport Park.

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