

## Patton and Harris leave VIP stamp on Clipsal Opener

Written by Administrator

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VIP Petfoods sponsored V8 Ute Drivers Brad Patton and Ryal Harris recorded impressive results and left their respective 'paw prints' on the first round of the 2011 Auto One V8 Ute Racing Series – protected by Armor All at the season opening Clipsal 500 last weekend.

Debuting their stunning near identical VIP Petfoods XR8 Falcons the Queensland duo set about leaving a lasting impression on the demanding Adelaide street circuit and both came away satisfied with their contrasting fortunes.

Patton's #14 VIP Petfoods / WICKED / Denco Falcon was in the wars early in Race One but showed exceptional car speed in Race Two to speed back from the rear of the grid and show significant potential in his brand new car.

"I thought originally that something in the car must have broken in Race One causing it to spin, but the team have reviewed the incident and the driver has to wear this one," Patton admits with a wry grin, "but I was really pleased with our speed over the weekend as a whole. This a very nice car."

That car speed was a welcome reward for the Big Gun team and head engineer Joe De Vries in particular who built a new car for Patton after last season's XR8 was destroyed at the Surfers Paradise event in October.

Testimony to Patton's skill and the car's speed was Brad receiving the SS Inductions Hard Charger award for making up 14 positions in Race Two!

Livewire Queenslander Ryal Harris was shrewdly brought into the Big Gun team for 2011 to get

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podium results and assist his teammates with building their respective car speeds and strategies and that move immediately paid off.

Harris was instantly one of the two fastest cars in practice and qualifying and the #58 VIP Petfoods / Supa Shake / Denco Falcon was immediately distinctive up front.

"This car is a dream to drive," admitted Harris after he locked in a runner-up finish in Race One for the weekend, "I drove Holdens the last few years but the way this car handles is terrific. It's going to be a great year ahead, I feel really good racing with such a great team. It makes such a big difference when you can run with a team like this."

The car is the ex Rob Jarvis XR8 and Ryal settled in like he'd been driving the car all weekend with a second place overall finish for the series opener.

CNW Electrical sponsored driver and Big Gun Racing Director Peter Burnitt had a sensational start to his new season in the CNW / Team Kanga XR8, recording some pleasing results in the four races and earning himself the "Masters Trophy" for the best finishing (non-professional) driver over 45 years of age.

"We did well at Adelaide last year in the legends event with Chris Pither where we broke the track record," grins Burnitt, "and this year we made an impact on our own. It's a great way to start the year off."

The fourth man in the Big Gun Racing Team is Queensland Fruit Juice magnate Greg "Freddie" Willis.

Willis turned heads both in the paddock and on the track with his spectacular orange and black "Only Juice" XR8 Falcon.

"I feel good in the car and I feel good in this team," says Willis, "I'm excited about the season ahead."

With promotional duties involving various car appearances in Queensland over the next few days the repair and prepare mode is well and truly activated for the Big Gun team at race headquarters.

All this of course, with the almost 10,000km return road trip for the second round of the Series at Barbagallo Raceway in Western Australia!

Overall results:

Ryal Harris (VIP Petfoods / Supa Shake / Denco)

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Qual: 4th R1: 2nd R2: 8th R3: 2nd R4: 2nd Overall: 2nd

Brad Patton (VIP Petfoods / WICKED Energy Drink / Denco)

Qual: 10th R1: DNF R2: 18th R3: 15th R4: 12th Overall: 17th

Peter Burnitt (CNW Electrical / Team Kanga)

Qual: 20th R1: 18th R2: 13th R3: 13th R4: DNF Overall: 20th

Greg Willis (Only Juice)

Qual: 21st R1: 21st R2: 30th R3: 27th R4: 18th Overall: 23rd

Please visit [www.biggunracing.com.au](http://www.biggunracing.com.au) for more information on the team!