



Ryal “The Kid” Harris has claimed the Armor All Pole Award and \$1000 cash at Round 6 of the Auto One V8 Ute Racing Series – protected by Armor All on his home track in practise for this weekend’s Armor All Gold Coast 600.

The V8 Utes were first on track this morning for their one and only practice session, with Craig Dontas taking the fastest time followed by Chris Pither, Ryal Harris and Gold Coast Veteran Charlie O’Brien.

Dontas couldn’t repeat the effort in Qualifying and dropped to 19th after crossing the blend line, the penalty being loss of his fastest time. Harris however, had a repeat of his Bathurst Pole win and put in his fastest lap with only a few minutes remaining of the session and pipped Series leader Chris Pither who led most of the way by only two tenths of a second.

It is the V.I.P. Petfoods drivers third Pole in a row and he is pretty excited about it.

“It’s good to start on the front row and in front of a home crowd is great. I just want to catch Chris on the points and with him in second I haven’t really gained much. I will have to be pretty aggressive in the reversed grid race I think to try and snatch some points off him,” said Harris.

Pither pitted in the final minutes after clouting the wall, and was forced to watch the result from the seat of his Ice Break Racing Holden, however held onto his second spot making it a Ford/Holden front row for the start of Race 1 tomorrow.

““I’m pretty disappointed; I don’t know what else we could have done. I held position until the last couple of laps and the engine was getting too hot. At least we are starting on the front row, which is where we wanted to be and I’m still in the lead in the Series,” he said.

Third fastest was Brisbane based Ryan Hansford, son of the late motorcycle champion Gregg Hansford, who also put in his best lap late in the game. This is the best qualifying result for the Rookie after a fourth in Townsville in his Truckline backed Ford.

“I was pretty pumped when I heard it on the radio. It’s my best result for the year. I was a bit sceptical before heading out but am really happy with the result. I like this circuit a lot, it’s the only track I’d ever come and watch Dad on,” said Hansford.

Fourth was Monster Energy Drink driver Nathan Pretty ahead of David Sieders who pipped Bundaberg Racing’s Cameron McConville by only six one hundredths of a second to take fifth.

Reigning Champion Grant Johnson bought his Holden home in seventh, ahead of long-time rival Jack Elsegood in eighth. Ben Dunn crossed the line in his Hayman’s Electrical backed Ford in ninth and Charlie O’Brien closed out the top ten.

Local, Rohan Barry, drove well on his 2011 debut to claim 12th overall and Auto One Wildcard driver David Besnard also had a good drive claiming 15th for his first outing in a V8 Ute.

The Big Gun Racing team did a spectacular job repairing V8 Ute #14 of Brad Patton and #4 of Peter Burnitt for this weekend after the two were involved in two separate incidents at Bathurst that almost wrote the cars off. Unfortunately the V.I.P. Petfoods backed Ford of Brad Patton will be sent back to the workshop tonight to replace the engine after overheating issues handicapped his day.

“It’s just disappointing for the guys. They’ve worked so hard to get it on track this weekend but we’ll send it up tonight and hopefully start again tomorrow,” said Patton who still managed to Qualify 18th.

Kim Jane was unlucky to lose his power steering on his fastest lap and crossed the blend line. Wake-up Backpackers Warren Millet also suffered the same fate when he also crossed a blend line and both were served with penalties.

The V8 Utes will hit the track at 10:15am tomorrow for Race 1 and again on Sunday at 8:30am for Race 2 followed by Race 3 at 12:30pm, which will be televised LIVE on Network Seven.