



PORSCHE

Press Information

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## Porsche team set New Zealand driving record

Feilding, 8th August 2006: A six driver team has today raised the New Zealand endurance distance record\* after a marathon 24-hour session in a Porsche 996 at the Manfeild Autocourse.

Challenging the ten-year old record, the team set off at 9am on Monday (7th August) and braved arduous weather conditions to surpass the previous mark with over an hour left to run.

Powered by 96 octane petrol, the 996 twin-turbo Porsche set new 1, 6, 12, 18 and 24-hour distance marks; achieved in dismal weather compared to the previous attempt in October 1996.

Car owner Mack Storey (Auckland) started the event on a wet track under sunny skies, however by the time the reigns were handed over to Ross Heffernan the weather had started to turn. An approaching front returned the track to a wet condition before strong winds and rain took their turn at slowing down the attempt. At the half-way mark the Porsche 996 was still in strong form and was already an hour up on the previous time/distance record.

As the drivers stuck to their two-hour change-over sequence, they all had to learn the track in the dark, assisted by solar charged garden lights and road cones marking the critical outline of the circuit.

While not plagued by any significant mechanical failing, unscheduled pitstops were to check critical suspension components and brake pad/tyre wear. In utilising the Porsche for the attempt, the level of maintenance allowed the crew to spend time watching TV and not miss the Monday night episode of 'Desperate Housewives'.

The only driver in the line-up to have contested the 1996 benchmark, Ross Heffernan expressed how critical stability was to achieving a result: "One of the things that I am very aware of is the ultimate goal – which is 24-hours. So if the crew chief says to do a certain lap time you do it. He has certain things going on in his mind that we as drivers may not be aware of – he's looking at things like pads and conserving tyres. It's the consistency that gets the car to the finish after 24-hours."

"...It was great to drive a car like this – the calibre of it; it's just awesome, although the track was very wet – otherwise it was a nice comfortable drive," he added.

With the last driver change just before the break of day, it was attempt organiser Harry Dodson who took on the task to 'bring it home' – taking the chequered flag to the delight of the joined two-car record attempt crew.

"It was really good; it's obviously hard to get there and have it resting on your shoulders – the whole team, so close to the 24 hours. So it was really good, a good effort to get there."

Although surprised by the rain, Dodson said he didn't expect it to be so wet for so long: "Very rarely do you get 24 hours of rain – but we had the right car for the weather conditions."

The six driver lineup also included Steven Neville, Jeff Hogg and Ray Williams. “I was surprised,” started Williams (Auckland). “We always wondered in the wet if we’d be struggling, but this car is so good that we didn’t seem to be going that much slower than when we started. We were still doing 1m23s 1m26s lap times – so were very very excited.”

The new 24-hour distance set was 2942.13km at an average speed of 122.66km/h, surpassing the previous mark achieved on October 10 1996 by 188.17km\*.

\* Subject to MotorSport NZ ratification.



The Porsche New Zealand Endurance Team battled the elements to set a New Zealand 24-hour endurance distance record at Manfeild today. Photo: Lance Hastie.

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