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Crash dents Webling's hopes

A crash into the track barriers shortly after the start of the second race in the MTA Formula Ford championship round at Ruapuna (Christchurch) last weekend has dented Taranaki's Stefan Webling's hopes of winning this season's Championship which he had been leading going into this round.

Webling and rival Richie Stanaway both made near perfect starts from the front row of the grid and headed towards the kink in the main straight, both trying to get onto the best line through the kink. That position was what they both wanted and neither backed off with the resulting banging of wheels which sent Webling spinning off into the barriers along the inside of the track, ripping off the left front wheel and suspension. Stanaway escaped undamaged.

"We both wanted that piece of the track – I thought I was clear of him but unfortunately we banged wheels which spun me into the wall. Thanks to my great Motorsport Solutions team my car was repaired and ready for the third race, after a lot of work," said Webling.

Stanaway in his new Mygale had claimed pole position in qualifying with Webling alongside him, then Jamie McNee and Martin Short.

Stanaway made the best start to take the lead with Webling in second. After dropping back a little, Webling then closed right up to the tail of Stanaway, putting him under huge pressure as he occasionally pulled alongside. However Stanaway didn't make any mistakes or leave any gaps and took the win by 0.075 of a second, Webling setting a new lap record.

Race two – won by Stanaway – was a DNF after the crash, but Webling again showed his determination and skill after having to start in fifth place on the grid for the third race, by mixing it in a huge wheel-to-wheel battle with Simon and Mitchell Evans, McNee and Short. Great racing and good driving by Webling saw him get to the head of this pack and then set out after Stanaway, gradually hauling him in to be on his tail again for the final lap, but again Stanaway left no gaps or chances, winning by just 0.133 of a second.



Stefan Webling ahead of Jamie McNee at Ruapuna

Photo: Lee Howell/Kaptured

Points: Stanaway 565, Webling 547, S Evans 453, McNee 443, M Evans 429, Short 397.

Next round: January 9-11 2009. Levels Raceway Timaru.

Webling's 2008-9 MTA Formula Ford championship campaign is supported by VnC Cocktails, Altherm, Diverse Extreme Team, Max Pennington Auto City, Warner Construction and Horizon Energy.

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Stefan Webling is supported by:

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