

Plus Fitness Takes on Mount Panorama Bathurst 1000

Three sets of brothers to create history in this October's race

NEWCASTLE-based brothers Aaren and Drew Russell will achieve a life-long dream this year of racing in the most famous race in Australia - the Supercheap Auto Bathurst 1000 at Mount Panorama sponsored by Australian gym chain, Plus Fitness.

Regulars in the V8 Supercars Dunlop Series over the past decade, the Novocastrian duo has been granted a wildcard entry by V8 Supercars to compete in the most famous race in Australia.

The Russell brothers join Nissan's Kelly brothers, Rick and Todd, and the Erebus team's Davison brothers, Will and Alex, on the grid this October.

It's the first time in just over 30 years (1984) that three sets of brothers have competed in the Bathurst 1000.

The Russells will also become second-generation Bathurst 1000 drivers given their father Wayne, who acts as their team manager, made four starts in the race between 1994 and 1997.

The brothers intend to carry #62 as their racing number at Bathurst, the same number their father used in his appearances in the Mount Panorama classic.

Aaren Russell, 23, has impressed in recent times in the Dunlop Series with podium finishes in the Plus Fitness Falcon last year at Queensland Raceway and Sydney Olympic Park and again this year at the Clipsal 500 in Adelaide.

His talents and efforts were recently recognised by V8 Supercars Championship team Lucas Dumbrell Motorsport, which gave him his first taste of a current-generation V8 Supercar at the recent Queensland Raceway event during the additional driver practice session.

Brother Drew Russell, 27, is the fourth-most experienced driver in the history of the Dunlop Series since making his debut in 2007.

While he may be making his Supercheap Auto Bathurst 1000 debut, he has plenty of Bathurst experience with seven Dunlop Series round starts at the famous circuit between 2007 and 2013.

He also paired with Steven Johnson and Kiwi Jonny Reid to win Class B and finish ninth overall in the 2013 Bathurst 12 Hour in a Porsche GT3 Cup Car.

Australian-owned gym franchise chain Plus Fitness will sponsor the team's entry into the 'Great Race'. This is a continuation of Plus Fitness association with the Novocastrian Motorsport team.

The team has sourced a Holden Commodore VF originally built by Garry Rogers Motorsport that raced at Bathurst in 2013.

GRM will prepare the car prior to the family-operated Russell team running it at the circuit on Bathurst race weekend.

The Russell brothers will also be on 'double duty' at Bathurst with Aaren's existing Plus Fitness Falcon Dunlop Series car entered for the weekend's round of the development series.

The brothers will share this car in the 250-kilometre mini-enduro on the Saturday afternoon in the curtain raiser in a bid to give each of them as many laps as possible prior to the big 1000-kilometre race on Sunday October 11.

QUOTEBOOK

Aaren Russell - Driver

"This is the sort of thing I've been working to achieve for many years and to do with it with my family and our own team makes it even more special.

"Motorsport is our passion, it's something we go 'all in' on and the sacrifices we've all made show just how committed we are to it.

"To be heading to Bathurst to compete in the most famous race in Australian sport is very special and not something I am taking lightly.

"We have huge respect for all of the V8 Supercars Championship teams competing at Bathurst. We'd like to simply stay out of trouble, fly the flag, complete the race and be happy with our day's work."

Drew Russell - Driver

"It's nice to be a part of history with three sets of brothers competing in this year's Bathurst race for the first time in just over 30 years.

"We're under no illusions as to our place in the pecking order when we head onto the track at Mount Panorama, we're not contending to win the race but we absolutely will be putting our front foot forward to give a positive and professional account of ourselves.

"I haven't been driving much of late, so running the Dunlop Series car up there is geared around me doing most of the driving in it to help get me ready for the main race on Sunday."

John Fuller – Founding Owner, Plus Fitness

“We’re excited about being in the biggest race in Australian motorsport. It’s hard to find ways to market nationally and it’s hard to find a sport that reaches different states and regional areas equally, but V8 Supercars and in particular the Bathurst race absolutely do that better than any other sport or event.

“Plus Fitness involvement with the Novocastrian team in the Dunlop Series has been great with engaging our franchisees that now follow Aaren’s racing program very closely.

“The Russells are great people and they have a similar culture to Plus Fitness. They work hard and have really clicked well with our business ethos.

“Plus Fitness had naming rights sponsorship of the Phillip Island V8 Supercars Championship round last year so this wildcard program for Bathurst continues on from that and keeps up our momentum up in the sport.”