

AERO 101

Thanks for sticking with us. We now move on to the second place winner of Pro Class, Barton Mawer in the PR Tech RP968!



If you recall, we covered the RP968 last year at their debut to WTAC. We'll cover the changes that we can see compared to last year. Starting at the front, the splitter/front wing combo has been retained. The hood, however, has been changed. Gone are the louvers that help extract hot air from the engine. Instead, 3 large slots are cut into the hood to help extract hot air from the exhaust manifold. The fenders have the same shape and vent, but directly below the fender and before the side skirt, we can see a bargeboard, like the ones used on F1 cars. The purpose of the bargeboard is to act as an airflow conditioner. They redirect the dirty, turbulent air coming off of the suspension arms, front

wheels, and wing. They also serve as vortex generators, due to their shape. The vortices that are shed help seal the side of the car. Something we did not talk about in last year's coverage of the RP968 is the odd "channels" at the front of the sideskirts/splitters. It has become apparent that these probably feed the diffuser at the rear, which is why the bargeboards have been introduced.



At the rear of the car, we can see are that they diffuser and spoiler now have added gurney flaps. Gurney flaps introduce an immediate obstruction to the air, slowing down the air. This increases the pressure on the high pressure side, which creates a larger pressure gradient when compared to the low pressure side, and aids in keeping the airflow attached. This is why you commonly see them on diffusers and on wings. Speaking of wings, the wing has been moved a bit higher. In our opinion, it

was already high enough last year, but we believe PR Tech decided to move it higher to gain more downforce. The last visible difference on this year's RP968 is the bracing on top of the wing that is attached to the shark fin. This had to be changed due to higher wing placement. We don't believe the higher wing placement worked out very well, because based on reports, the RP968 suffered from too much rear grip, which can definitely be a direct result of too much downforce. All in all, they were still able to secure 2nd place, which is a huge achievement for a team that has only attended WTAC twice!

Pictures courtesy of SpeedHunters.