

Scott McLaughlin and Robert Dahlgren's Arctic Adventure

Written by Jason (Neutral)

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Following Volvo Polestar Racing's historic first V8 Supercars victory at the recent Melbourne Grand Prix, drivers Scott McLaughlin and Robert Dahlgren flew direct to one of Volvo's winter testing bases to drive a number of Polestar-engineered road cars.

Located in Jokkmokk, 10km above the polar circle, the test track is set on a frozen lake with a number of different testing scenarios designed to push Volvos to the limit.

"I know this place very well after years of winter testing Volvo and Polestar road cars here," said Robert Dahlgren. "So it was great to be able to bring Scott up here – it certainly makes a difference being 20 degrees below freezing compared with the heat of Adelaide and Melbourne."

For Scott, the trip saw a number of firsts. "I've never seen snow before and the coldest place I've been to before Jokkmokk is Tassie, so it's certainly been an eye-opener!" he said.

"To be part of the road car winter test programme of a global brand like Volvo is awesome. I've never driven on studded tyres before, so it was interesting giving it some jandal out there and getting the hang of that while going sideways at 180km/h..."

Part of the programme included final sign-off of the ride characteristics of the next-generation Volvo S60 Polestar, while Dahlgren and McLaughlin also got a taste of a few secret Polestar prototypes currently undergoing development.

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“Winter testing is an important part of developing any car and Robert has been a vital part of the testing for many years, contributing to the development work of other Volvo models as well, such as the V40,” said Henrik Fries, Volvo S60 Polestar Project Manager.

“To have Robert back and Scott as a new addition to our current development work has been fruitful and we are glad to get their input.”

While in Jokkmokk, Dahlgren was keen to show McLaughlin some long-standing Swedish traditions like sauna-bathing and eating reindeer – and they also found time to fine-tune their handling skills with 100bhp snowmobiles capable of speeds up to 180km/h.

“The snowmobiling was mega,” said McLaughlin. “But the whole week has been awesome – I am just so pumped to get this experience.”

Following Jokkmokk, both drivers flew to Volvo's global headquarters in Gothenburg to meet senior personnel including Derek Crabb, Head of Powertrains and Motorsport Director of Volvo Cars.

Crabb was who was quick to acknowledge the global recognition of the Volvo Polestar Racing entry into Australia's V8 Supercars Championship.

“Scott's results so far in the V8 Supercars Championship have been impressive, and we are looking forward to seeing more of the season, as well as Robert continuing to make progress up through the field,” said Crabb.

A quick trip to the factory floor to see S60s being built was followed by a tour of Polestar's home base, where the drivers met race technicians and the engine builders of the V8 motor which powers both S60 V8 Supercars.

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"To see where a lot of the vital components and effort for our race cars comes from, and be able to thank the Polestar guys in person for all their hard work over the last 12 months, was awesome," said Scott.

A film of Robert and Scott's Swedish adventure will be broadcast on V8Xtra on Saturday 29 March as part of Chanel 7's telecast of the Tyrepower Tasmania 400.

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