

## EVERYTHING TO WIN AND LOTS TO LOSE AT FINAL TWO NATIONAL CROSS COUNTRY ROUNDS AT PARYS

The Ford Parys 400 and the Toyota Gazoo Racing SA Vaal 400, the final two rounds of the 2020 South African National Cross Country Series (SACCS) that take place on Friday and Saturday, 23 and 24 October, at Parys in the Free State will see teams going for gold, albeit with the utmost care as there are championship titles at stake, but it could go wrong in the blink of an eye.

With rounds four and five of the championship taking place over two consecutive days and almost 700 kilometres, teams will have to walk the fine line of giving it their best to accumulate maximum points while keeping it together as it is the final countdown with no time to make up for lost chances. The fact that only a few points separate the teams and a mistake can reshuffle the standings, will have everyone on their toes.

In the Production Vehicle Category, two more victories will not only give the reigning champions, Henk Lategan/Brett Cummings (Toyota Gazoo Racing SA Hilux) an unblemished record, but will see them defend their titles successfully. After eight months, team-mate Giniel de Villiers will have his Spanish navigator, Alex Haro back in the seat next to him and they will aim for good results as will the third members of the team, Shameer Variawa/Dennis Murphy.

Chris Visser/Danie Stassen (Total Excellium Toyota Hilux) would like to forget the previous race where they could not finish and better luck could see them back on the final podium. Brian Baragwanath/Taye Perry (Century Racing CR6) have tasted success and would like to play amongst the frontrunners again – or even lead – and a victory will be the perfect way to conclude the season before heading for the Dakar Rally. Also in the mix will be the two Ford Castrol Cross Country Teams, Lance Woolridge/Elvéne Vonk and Gareth Woolridge/Boyd Dreyer in the Ford Rangers who have comfortably settled into the FIA Class.

The FIA Class will also see Clint Weston/Gerhard Snyman (King Price Xtreme Mercedes-Benz) looking to add more points to their tally as will Johan and his son, Sean van Staden (Elf Renault Duster) and Ernest Roberts/Henry Köhne (Red-Lined Motorsport Nissan Navara) who can be dangerous. The Fourie couple, Marius and Jolinda (Ford Ranger) are back for more of the action as is Century Racing's Mark Corbett and Juan Möhr, who partnered de Villiers in the previous two rounds, while Philip Botha/Roelof Janse van Vuren (Nissan Navara) will be competing for the first time this season in the SACCS.

The position at the front of the closely fought Class T standings changed a few times this season and no safe bet can be placed on who will eventually wear the crown. Former champions, Johan and Werner Horn (Malalane Toyota Hilux) regained the lead after the third round, but Terence Marsh/Letshego Zulu (Red-Lined Motorsport Nissan Navara) are still in contention for the title. Gary Bertholdt/Geoff Minnitt (Total Excellium Toyota Hilux) are always in with a chance of victory while consistency has proven to be the name of the game for Wors Prinsloo/André Vermeulen (Neil Woolridge Motorsport Ford Ranger) who are currently third in the championship.

Their team-mates, Malcolm and his son, Frans Kock, won the previous round and more silverware will be a nice way to round off their season while Jacques van Tonder/Sammy Redelinghuys, also competing under the Neil Woolridge Motorsport banner, will be back in action for the first time since the season opener.

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In the Special Vehicle Category, defending champions, Lance Trethewey/Adriaan Roets (LT Earthmovers BAT Venom) will be in action for the first time this season and that can make for some interesting racing. They will undoubtedly put pressure on the current leaders, Tim Howes/Gary Campbell (Tim Drew Property Development Zarco Magnum) who have their eyes on the overall and Class A titles.

Sandra Labuschagne/Jonck with husband Jaco Jonck in the navigator seat of the Total Agri Porter will hope to round off their season on a high note and on the podiums. Boela Botes makes a welcome return to Cross Country racing with Jay Pretorius (Porter) and could be the proverbial dark horse to spice things up even more. André Fourie/Hendrikus Pienaar (BAT) have also entered as has Trace Price Moor/Shawn Braithwaite (BAT) in Class P.

In the Class G Side-by-Side (SxS) Championship, the consistent finishers, Nico du Rand/Rikus Hattingh (Can-Am Maverick) are not home safe yet and they will feel the pressure as any of the top four teams can walk away with the title. The Mostert brothers, Werner and Leon, will hope for their Can-Am Maverick to play ball so they can defend their title successfully while the winners of the opening round, Dean Bradbury/Timmy Botes (Can-Am Maverick), can also still focus on the title.

Theo Erasmus/Edward Odendaal (Can-Am Maverick) can make inroads with good results while a second consecutive podium result will go down nicely for Christo Rose/Arno Olivier who, like the rest of the entrants, also compete with the Can-Am Maverick. Archie Rutherford has teamed up with his younger son, Justin (Red-Lined Motorsport) while Simon Murray/Achim Bergman (Total Excellium) as well as Hanno Bierman/Pieter de Beer are back for more of the action.

Newcomers Michael and Jean de Beer have entered for the Ford Parys 400 only while Coenie Bezuidenhout/Jaco Schutte will take on both events.

The Ford Parys 400 starts on Friday, 23 October at 08:30 with a 14km Pirelli Qualifying Race to determine the starting order for the main race that continues at 10:30 when competitors tackle a 164km loop from the Parys Airfield. After completing the loop once, they will stop at the Designated Service Point (DSP) for a compulsory 30-minute de-control before taking on the loop again.

On Saturday, 24 October the Toyota Gazoo Racing SA Vaal 400 will get underway at 08:00 with a 14km Pirelli Qualifying Race. The main race starts at 10:00 and after completing the 168 kilometre loop, teams will again stop at DSP for the compulsory de-control before racing the final loop.

Enthusiasts and supporters can follow the action on the RallySafe App that can be downloaded free of charge from the App Store and Google Play Store, and features all the action as it happens. Due to COVID-19 Regulations the Ford Parys 400 and the Toyota Gazoo Racing SA Vaal 400 events are still closed to spectators.