

DUST AND SAND AWAITS SPECIAL VEHICLE TEAMS AT VRYBURG 400 – WHO WILL TAKE THE WIN?

The 2021 season has taken its toll on competitors in the Special Vehicle Category of the South African National Cross Country Series (SACCS) and a relatively small field has entered the Vryburg 400, the sixth and penultimate round of the championship that takes place on 29 and 30 October in the North-West Province. The category has, however, seen teams persevere to the bitter end and the quality field that will take on the Vryburg 400, will once again prove why they compete in open-wheel vehicles without windscreens and in testing conditions.

Competitors in Class A and Class P as well as in the Class G Side-by-Side (SxS) championship enjoy the sandy, desert-like conditions although the dust and thick sand adds a different dimension to their race. And although the Overall Special Vehicle Championship as well as the Class A titles are wrapped up and despite the fact that some teams have had their share of misfortune, they will again be on the start line to give it another go.

The 2019 champions, Lance Trethewey and Adriaan Roets (King Price Xtreme BAT) have taken five victories on the trot and have secured both the overall and the Class A championship titles. This does not mean they will miss another enjoyable race or miss the chance to take home more silverware. And with the opportunity to step onto the podium again, their team-mates, Boela Botes/Jay Pretorius (Porter) will also be in action at the Vryburg 400.

Lood du Preez/Tiaan Swart (Farmers Meat Stryker) have also scored points on two occasions this year and will hope to do so again. Former SA National Navigators' Champion, Sandra Labuschagne-Jonck and her husband, Jaco Jonck, have acquired a BAT Viper and will again be part of the action with their aim to receive the chequered flag for the first time this season. Sandra has many fond memories of racing in Vryburg and a finish at this event, will be special.

A new entry in Class A, belongs to the motorcycle riders, Nic Pienaar and Carl Swanepoel (BAT) who have teamed up and have been competing in regional races during the year. Upington businessman, Willem du Toit and Victor Fincham, Class P (CR-T) participated in the TGRSA 1000 Desert Race, on their doorstep, earlier this year and will be back for more of the same at Vryburg.

In the Class G championship, where all the teams participate with Can-Am Maverick SxS vehicles, each race has had a different winner with the current leaders, the brothers and newcomers, Cecil and Elardus Larney, are the only team who have started and finished every race. They are not totally out of the woods yet, but they have the title in sight and after winning the desert race at Upington in June, the team are ready for more.

The teenagers, Kent Rutherford and Kabelo Mokanyane will aim for another good result. They finished second at the Sugarbelt 400 with Rutherford currently third amongst the drivers with a chance to move up while Mokanyane, who missed the Upington event, can also better his standings with a good result.

Bazil Bezuidenhout (Moto-Netix KEC Racing) and Rikus Hattingh will also be back for more after winning the 4x4 Mega World 400 (round four) in the Free State. Hattingh has navigated for both Bazil and his father Coenie

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during the season and is second in the Class G Navigators' Championship. After winning the most recent event, Geoff Minnitt/Gerhard Snyman will be in good spirits and will aim for another finish.

There will be a different and younger Mostert in the navigator seat with Werner behind the wheel of the King Price Xtreme Can-Am Maverick. Werner's 15 year-old son, Werner Jr, will tell his dad where to go as Werner Sr.'s regular navigator and brother, Leon, is still recovering from injured ribs after the 4x4 Mega World 400. The Mostert brothers could only complete the season opener and a finish will be priceless for the father and son duo.

The Vryburg 400 action will start at the Vryburg Motor Club on Friday, 29 October at 13:00 when the 42 kilometre Pirelli Qualifying Race will determine the starting order for the main race on Saturday. The main race will consist of a 179 kilometre loop which competitors will have to do twice with the Start/Finish and Designated Service Park (DSP) at the Vryburg Motor Club. Vaccinated spectators will be permitted at the Vryburg Motor Club, but no spectators will have access to the DSP and will have to adhere to all published COVID-19 Protocols.

Enthusiasts can download the free RallySafe App from the App Store and Google PlayStore to follow the race with maps, daily results and information about the race.

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