



Media Information

MERE SECONDS SEPARATE TEAMS AT CHALLENGING ROUND FIVE AS NEW WINNERS EMERGE

The second leg of the event at Nampo Park, round five of the SA Rally-Raid Championship (SARRC) that took place on Saturday, 1 October a day after the fourth round the previous day, proved to be yet another challenging event for teams competing in the Production and Special Vehicle Categories who had to tackle another 350 kilometre race for the second consecutive day.

Round five of the Free State double-header on Saturday got underway with a short 10 kilometre Pirelli Qualifying Race that determined the starting order for the first of the two 172 kilometre loops, with the fastest 10 teams choosing their grid positions.

The NWM Ford Castrol T1+ Ranger of Lance Woolridge/Elvéne Vonk posted the fastest time albeit only a second faster than three teams with the exact same time. These teams included team-mates, Gareth Woolridge/Boyd Dreyer and two Toyota Gazoo Racing SA teams – the defending champions and winners of round four, Henk Lategan/Brett Cummings and Giniel de Villiers/Duncan Murphy with their DKR Hilux T1+ vehicles.

Lategan/Cummings elected to go first with Woolridge/Vonk in third place and Woolridge/Dreyer, who opened the road the previous day, off in fourth place. Woolridge/Dreyer were however quickest after the first of the two loops although only four seconds separated them from Lategan/Cummings with mere seconds separating the rest of the teams.

In the end it was Lategan/Cummings who claimed their second victory in as many days, after a clean but tricky run with the TGRSA team again owning the overall Production Vehicle Category and FIA T1+ podiums. Lategan/Cumming (04:10:02) lead their team-mates, De Villiers/Murphy by a minute and 40 seconds with Shameer Variawa/Danie Stassen finishing third (04:12:34), making up for a disappointing fourth round. Gareth Woolridge/Dreyer were fifth (04:15:04) after they lost time due to a mechanical issue. A cracked oil pipe on the turbo forced Lance Woolridge/Vonk into retirement.

Behind the T1+ battles, the nail-biting duel between the FIA T1 winners of the past two rounds, Eben Basson/Leander Pienaar (#TeamHilux Rally-Raid Toyota Hilux) and Chris Visser/Albertus Venter (Red-Lined Motorsport REVO) continued in the Free State dust. This time it was Visser/Venter who were victorious (04:17:40), a margin of only 17 seconds separating the two teams who finished fifth and sixth respectively in the overall standings.

Visser/Venter are not title contenders, but Daniel Schröder/Ryan Bland (Nissan Navara) are, with the team finishing third in FIA T1 after losing time with a flat tyre. Schröder/Bland (04:24:01) finished eighth overall, just under two minutes behind the winners of FIA T1.2, Lance Trethewey/Leonard Cremer (King Price Xtreme CR6) who hit a fence and lost time with a flat tyre.

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The top 10 overall were rounded off by the Horn brothers, Johan and Werner (#TeamHilux Rally-Raid Toyota Hilux DKR T1+) - 04:24:29 – who finished fifth in FIA T1+ and Gary Bertholdt/Juan Möhr (Toyota Hilux) – 04:25:37 – who were fourth in FIA T1. They lost time when they went into a ditch in the second loop of the day.

After an FIA T1.2 victory the previous day, Malcolm and Frans Kock (JCP Steel Supplies CR6) went on to finish second in the class (04:26:52) with their team-mates, Ernest Roberts/Henry Köhne (04:30:00) also on the podium despite a flat tyre and a faulty on-board jack. Simon Murray/Achim Bergmann (WCT HT2 Toyota Hilux Turbo) were fourth in FIA T1.2.

The Class T victory again went to Jayden Els/Armand du Toit (King Price Xtreme Renault Duster) despite the team finding the thick sand and dust quite challenging. They had a gap of just under four and a half minutes to Class T runners-up, Johan and Sean van Staden (KEC Racing Renault Duster) who were initially leading the class, but experienced gearbox problems. The Class T podium was rounded off by another father and son team, Hendrik and Heinrich du Plessis (Ford) with Christo Rose/Arno Olivier (Neil Woolridge Motorsport Ford Ranger) fourth.

As with the fourth round the previous day, the rest of the Red-Lined Motorsport vehicles again received the chequered flag with the VK50 of Nicolas Pienaar/Carl Swanepoel (Super Energi Race Fuels) finishing fifth in FIA T1 after a 'clean and most enjoyable' day. They were only 52 seconds ahead of Johan de Bruyn/Gerhard Schutte (Red-Lined VK56) who were sixth in T1 while Philip Botha/Roelof Janse van Vuren (VK56) were seventh in the class and Thomas Bell/Wade Harris (REVO) eighth.

Richard Leeke/Zaheer Bodhanya (Leeke Motorsport) finished ninth in T1.

After a spectacular podium the previous day, there was disaster for Guy Botterill/Simon Vacy-Lyle (TGRSA DKR Hilux T1+) who were forced to retire after they hit the stranded Can-Am Maverick of Special Vehicle competitors, Geoff Minnitt/Gerhard Snyman. Both teams were uninjured.

Minnitt/Snyman, who won Class G in the Special Vehicle Category the day before, had a good first loop, but went head-over-heels 65 kilometres into the second loop, and were forced to retire. The class was won by title rivals, the Mostert father and son team of Werner and Ian (Moto-Netix Racing Can-Am) who finished third overall in the category.

The Special Vehicle Category was won for the first time this season by Lood du Preez/Chris Visser Jnr (Farmers Meat Stryker) – 04:42:50 – who also posted the fastest time after the Pirelli Qualifying Race. They were followed by Tim Howes/Gary Campbell (BAT Spec 4) who were the only other Class A team to finish (04:48:15). Howes/Campbell started the first of the two 172 kilometre loops from seventh place in the category but struggled with power problems.

Three more Class G teams completed a sweltering and tough day in the Free State with Francois de Wit/Ewald van Rensburg improving on their third place at the fourth round to finish second (4:58:56) with the defending champions, Cecil and Elardus Larney (05:11:25) rounding off the Class G podium. Glen Theron/Craig Galvin (Moto-Netix Racing Can-Am) made up for not being able to complete round four and were fourth in Class G.

Some of the major casualties included Trace Price Moor/Shawn Braithwaite (BAT Venom) who retired with a broken side shaft as well as the Class P entry of Quentin Lessing/Noel Acton (CR-T).

The double-header at Nampo Park was tough and challenging, but it was also most enjoyable as competitors complimented the testing route while the event and routes suited the high level of fierce competition.

The final rounds of the SA Rally-Raid Championship takes place at the Parys Airfield on Friday and Saturday 11 & 12 November.

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