



Media Information

## **POPULAR NKOMAZI 400 IS BACK AND OPENS EXCITING 2023 SA NATIONAL RALLY-RAID CHAMPIONSHIP IN MALALANE AREA IN MPUMALANGA**

After a six-year hiatus, the Nkomazi 400 is back on the South African Rally-Raid Championship calendar with this popular event forming the opening round of the 2023 season on Friday and Saturday, 24 and 25 March in the Malalane area of Mpumalanga.

The Nkomazi 400, proudly brought to you by #TeamHilux Rally-Raid and Nkomazi Fuel, was first introduced to national rally-raid competitors in 2013 as the brainchild of Johan Horn Snr., businessman and father of former multiple champions, Johan and Werner Horn.

Preparations for the upcoming Nkomazi 400 are well on track under the meticulous eye of Horn Snr. of Malalane Toyota.

This year, the Nkomazi 400 will consist of a 65 kilometre Qualifying Race on Friday that will determine the starting order for the main race on Saturday. On Saturday, competitors in both the Production Vehicle Category and the Special Vehicle Category will take on a loop of approximately 175 kilometres, which they will have to complete twice to be able to open their scoresheets for the rest of the 2023 SARRC season.

The Start/Finish, Race Headquarters and Designated Service Point (DSP) will be at the Nkomazi Fuel & Gas Depot and in close proximity to its sister companies, the beautifully appointed Paradise Creek Lodge and the charming luxury Nkomazi Kruger Lodge and Spa approximately four kilometres from Malalane.

On Friday, the start of the Pirelli Qualifying Race will kick off proceedings at 12:30 from the Nkomazi Fuel & Gas Depot while the start at 08:00 for the main race on Saturday will also be from the same venue.

On Saturday, teams will return to DSP for a compulsory service break at the halfway mark while the finish and podium celebrations will also take place at the Nkomazi Fuel & Gas Depot.

It promises to be a scenic, but challenging route and competitors who participated in the previous Nkomazi events, might have flashbacks of the sugarcane fields and plantations as well as fast, open sections and testing mountainous terrain. There might, however just be a surprise or two waiting...

From the start of the main race at the Nkomazi Fuel & Gas Depot, crews will cross the Jeppes Reef Road and head in an anti-clockwise direction towards the Nkomazi Toll Plaza with most of the route traversing property in close proximity to the N4. They will then head towards the Kaalrug Road and the Low's Creek Plantation and if they have time to look around, they will be met by the spectacular scenery of the Three Sisters mountain range, the highest point in the area as well as the Holnek area towards the Eswatini border.

One of the main aims of the Nkomazi 400 was to bring the excitement of rally-raid racing to the people in the Malalane area and spectators will not be disappointed, as they will be able to experience the action on the route from various vantage points.

Mpumalanga based #TeamHilux Rally-Raid team members, the Horn family from Malalane, Komatipoort businessman, Eben Basson and the Witbank-based entrepreneurs, Fouché and Bertus Blygnaut, are not leaving a stone unturned to ensure a spacious and comfortable DSP facility for the teams and spectators. Food and refreshments will be on sale at DSP, while route maps will be available online in the week leading up to the event.

Spectators and enthusiasts are invited to enjoy the action of the Nkomazi 400 and to rub shoulders with the teams, quite a few of whom have recently returned from successfully completing the tough two-week Dakar Rally in Saudi Arabia. They will also be able to get a closer look at some of the world's most technologically advanced race vehicles that are designed, built and prepared in South Africa.

For more information about the event and the championship visit:

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