



Media Information

POPULAR SPECIAL VEHICLES WILL ENTERTAIN THE BOTSWANA CROWDS AT THE TGRSA 1000 KALAHARI BOTSWANA DESERT RACE WHILE GOING FOR GOLD

The Toyota Gazoo Racing 1000 Kalahari Botswana Desert Race, the third round of the 2023 SA Rally-Raid Championship and the only marathon event on the calendar, will take place over three days on 23, 24 and 25 June at Jwaneng in Botswana, and the popular Special Vehicles will again entertain the crowds while the teams will go for gold with their powerful open-wheel vehicles.

After an absence of three years, the iconic desert race returns to Botswana with Jwaneng welcoming the race back as it last took place in this area in 2018.

And if all goes according to plan, a desert race victory can go to the 2022 winners and defending Special Vehicle Category champions, Tim Howes/Gary Campbell (BAT Spec 4). With a race victory and a runner-up result so far this season, Howes/Campbell are in a good position to solidify their standings while a good result and precious silverware will be pointing towards a positive second half of 2023.

They can expect competition from veterans John Thomson/Maurice Zermatten (Zarco Challenger) as well as Lood du Preez/Junior Vardy (Farmer's Meat Stryker). Thomson/Zermatten missed the season opener while Du Preez could not finish the Sugarbelt 400, with Eugene Bierman/Pieter Visser (BAT Spec 3) who could not complete the first race of the season, will be looking to build on their podium result at the recent Sugarbelt 400.

Also in Class A are experienced desert race competitors, Andrew Makenete and navigator, Ntaote Bereng from Lesotho, (BAT Makmobile) who have had previous successes in Botswana while the local team of Ahmed Hussain/Victor Fincham (BAT Spec 3) will be a definite crowd favourite. Mohammed Noor/Antoine Stander (Porter) will also be in action.

The smaller and more nimble vehicles in Class G have proven that although fitted with smaller engines with less horsepower at their disposal, they can finish amongst the frontrunners. The deep sandy tracks and faster, flat routes are challenges these vehicles must face, but with consistency and minimal mechanical problems, they can be a threat to the stronger vehicles in Class A.

The defending Class G champions, Werner and his teenage son, Ian (Moto-Netix Racing Can-Am Maverick) won the event in Upington last year while Werner and his brother, Leon, won the class in Botswana in 2019 when the race was hosted in Selebi Phikwe. It will, however, be a first visit to Botswana for Ian who is now behind the wheel with his experienced dad reading him the notes. Their team-mates, Glen Theron/Craig Galvin finished third in the class last year, and like their team-mates, will aim to keep their 2023 scorecard clean and conquer the desert in Botswana.

A third Moto-Netix Racing team, João Lota/Nuno dos Santos will travel from Angola to Botswana and will be in action with a Can-Am Maverick X3 XRS RR and as experienced racers, a good result can be expected from the visitors. The local Botswana team of Mohammed Dada/Mohammad Saloojee will also take on the TGR 1000 Kalahari Botswana Desert Race and will do so with their X3 RS Turbo.

Geoff Minnitt is a desert race expert and has competed as both a navigator and a driver. He finished second in Class G last year and will tackle the race this year together with navigator Rodney Burke (Hydro Power Equipment Can-Am Maverick). Other entries include the class winners of the Sugarbelt 400, Ewald van Rensburg/Johan Scheepers as well as Francois de Wit who will join forces with Pierre Jordaan. Both teams will compete with the Can-Am Maverick.

The Class P regulars, Quintin Lessing/Brendon Smith (CRT) will be joined by Khalil Hussain/André Geldenhuys (Sandmaster) and Mohammed Moutson/Moinuddin Ahmad (BAT).

On Friday, 23 June teams will take on a 61 kilometre Pirelli Qualifying Race at 12:30 to determine the starting positions for the first of the two 220 kilometre loops on Saturday, 24 June. The race on Saturday will take competitors towards the east of Jwaneng and the results at the end of the day's racing will again be used to determine the starting order for the third and final day. On Sunday teams will again face two loops of 214 kilometres with the race moving towards the west of Jwaneng. Teams will return to the Designated Service Point (DSP) at the Jwaneng Sports Complex after the first of the two loops on both days. The TGR 1000 Kalahari Botswana Desert Race Headquarters as well as the Start/Finish will be situated at the Jwaneng Sports Complex.

All the action can be viewed from various vantage points along the route. The TGR 1000 can also be followed on the RallySafe App, available as a free download from the Google PlayStore and the iStore while updated information will be available on Facebook: saccsauto; Instagram: saccs_auto and Twitter: @SACCS.Auto

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