**ZWARTKOPS EXTREME FESTIVAL THRILLS PRETORIA**

*Drama and action all the way in National Extreme Festival*

The National Extreme Festival delivered scintillating racing action and drama aplenty to delight fans at a balmy late autumn’s Zwartkops Raceway on Saturday. The South African Touring Cars, backed by SupaCup, three helpings of Polo Cup, flying Extreme Supercars, wings and slicks Formula 1600 single seaters, SunBet ZX10 Masters motorcycles and Toyota Gazoo Cup all contributed to a great day of racing.

Nathi Msimanga delivered a lights to flag opening South African Touring Cars race win from title leader Robert Wolk’s BMW. Msimanga was however penalised for a jump start to hand Wolk the win from Michael van Rooyen in a Toyota, Julian van der Watt’s VW, Anthony Pretorius’ Corolla, Andy Schofield’s BMW and Msimanga after Saood Variawa’s Toyota stopped. A dramatic race 2 opening lap saw Msimanga and Variawa, and Pretorius and Wolk clash and Pretorius and Msimanga out. That left van Rooyen to an easy heat and overall win from van der Watt, Schofield, and the recovering Wolk and Variawa.

Jonathan Mogotsi’s lights to flag opening SATC SupaCup victory stood over Keegan Campos’ similar Volkswagen SupaPolo and Bradley Liebenberg’s lone Toyota SupaStarlet as Charl Visser made a late move on Tate Bishop to snatch fourth. Keegan Campos gained revenge with a second heat win over Mogotsi and Liebenberg. He took advantage of the recovering Touring Cars to jump Visser for third. Bishop, Jason Campos, David Franco and Karah Hill were next home.

Stuart White powered his Lamborghini to an easy opening Extreme Supercars Driven By Dunlop win over GT3 winner Jono du Toit and Charl Arangies’ Mercedes-AMG GT3 disrupting a Lambo 1-2-3 ahead of Xolile Letlaka. Gianni Giannoccaro’s Nismo GT-R was fifth from Marius Jackson’s Audi R8, Class B winner Nicky Dicks’ Porsche and A winner Mark du Toit in another Lamborghini. White then delivered another driving lesson in race 2 as he cantered off to an easy win from Jono du Toit, Arnold Neveling’s Audi R8, a recovering Arangies after an earlier clash, and Giannoccaro. Mark du Toit and Dicks took the classes.

KZN lad Jason Loosemore took the opening Astron Energy Polo Cup race from locals Mo Karodia, Ethan Coetzee, lady racer Tyler Robinson and PE lad Jeandre Marais. John Kruger won Polo Masters from Derick Smalberger and Wayne Masters. Nathan Victor was on pole position for race 2 and led Karodia, Loosemore, Coetzee from lights to flag with VW rookie Kyle Visser sixth despite a late safety car. Smalberger turned the tables on Kruger with Masters third in the Masters. Loosemore then took the final as Karodia passed Coetzee for second, with Smalberger fourth from Roshaan Goodman, Rory Atkinson and Victor from the back. Kruger took Masters from Masters and overall winner Smalberger as Loosemore won the Cup day overall from Karodia and Ethan Coetzee.

Rookie Jagger Robertson continued his domination of the Investchem Formula 1600 wings and slicks single seaters with another albeit restarted lights to flag opening race win from KC Ensor Smith, Karabo Malemela, Jason Coetzee, and Alex Vos. Robertson then went on to make it a double for the day and four race wins on the trot to take control of the title chase with another close race 2 victory over Ensor-Smith. Siyabonga Mankonkwana was third from Vos, Malemela and Coetzee.

Clinton Seller was another man to continue a purple patch as he raced to his eighth SunBet ZX10 Masters motorcycle win on the trot. All Hein McMahon, Trevor Westman, Jason Lamb, Graeme van Breda, David Veringa, Johan le Roux, Keith Agliotti and the rest could do was look on. It was much the same as Seller marched on to the heat 2 win in from McMahon, Lamb, Westman, van Breda, Veringa, Byron Rathquel, Adriaan van Dalen and Agliotti.

Judd Bertholdt emerged a surprised double winner in the Volkswagen Rookie Cup. He took a fighting first race win from Dhivyen Naidoo and Jayden Goosen. Judd was then promoted from third to win heat 2 from the penalised Naidoo and Uzair Khan after Goosen was also penalised for a jump start. And Dawie van der Merwe remained unbeaten in five starts of the 2024 Toyota Gazoo Racing SA Cup over 86 rivals Setshaba Mashigo and Ryan Naicker. Sean Nurse also took Corolla GR Media honours again as Devon Scott did the Yaris double.

The National Extreme Festival now heads to the first of its two annual midwinter Eastern Cape appointments at Aldo Scribante in Gqeberha on Saturday 29 June. That’s really something special for PE race fans to look forward to. Diarise it now!