**ding dong Youngtimer battles.**

**Hot Group N battles recalled as maiden season signs off**

The season finale of the Historic Tour served up some ding dong battles in the HRSA Youngtimer category at Redstar raceway, near Delmas, this past weekend.

Four Youngtimers lined up to do battle, with the debutant Mazda Etude, of Stewart McLarty, a welcome addition to this growing class. Qualifying saw a mixed up grid with usual front runner Mike O’Sullivan Mosport Honda Ballade relegated to second, behind Jonathan Visser VW Jetta, with Stewart McLarty Mazda Etude next up. Rob Clark’s Containerforce Honda Ballade failed to set a time, after an oil feed pipe came adrift on the out lap, relegating him to the back of the grid.

With plenty of work to do in race 1, Clark set about catching and passing the McLarty Mazda Etude on the run down to turn 1. Meanwhile, O’Sullivan had hunted down Visser and engaged in a fierce battle before finally taking the position. Clark had closed the gap to Visser and finally made his move out of turn 4 and set about closing the gap to O’Sullivan. Catching is easier than passing and the pair engaged in some typical Group N door handle to doorhandle racing with the lead changed several times per lap. O’Sullivan eventually won out over Clark followed by Visser and McLarty.

Race 2 dished up more of the same with O’Sullivan and Clark running alongside each other, at the start, down to turn 1, closely followed by Visser. O’Sullivan edged ahead at turn 3. McLarty, celebrating 50 years of unbroken participation in motor sport, was getting to grips with his new Mazda Etude. With more development he will soon be in the mix with the other Youngtimer’s. Upfront battle lines had been drawn with Visser , Clark and O’Sullivan running in close company. On the penultimate lap, Clark and O’Sullivan had a contact going into turn 12, which gave Clark the advantage which he held to the flag followed by O’Sullivan, Visser and McLarty.

Overall for the day saw Clark edge O’Sullivan by 0.069secs, followed by Visser and McLarty.

With several more cars due to be completed in time for the 2024 season, the Ben Morgenrood HRSA Classic Youngtimer category is set provide even more excitement and close racing.

For more information about this exciting new category contact clajhbg@iafrica.com.

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