17 March 2024

**Loosemore, Victor Share Astron Energy Polo Cup Wins**

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| * Brilliant racing in Killarney’s season-opening Astron Energy Polo Cup * Jason Loosemore and Nathan Victor win Astron Polo Cup races * John Kruger takes debut Masters Class victory from Wayne Masters |

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**Johannesburg, 17 March 2024** – A cracking Astron Energy Polo Cup at Saturday’s Killarney Extreme Festival season opener celebrated new series sponsor Astron Energy, a new over-50 Masters class and the biggest Volkswagen Polo Cup grid on track for many a season. Best of all however, none of them had ever previously won a Polo Cup race!

The track action was extreme, as Jason Loosemore won an epic second heat to edge race 1 winner Nathan Victor for overall honours and the winner’s trophy for the day. John Kruger meanwhile came from behind to steal a Masters Class double.

It was clear throughout practice that qualifying would be close between local lad Victor’s Summit Racing Polo Cup and Richards Bay rival Loosemore’s Security Fencing and Alarms Team Red machine. Loosemore pipped Victor by six-hundredths of a second to claim his maiden pole position and the first point of the season.

Charl Smalberger made an impressive Polo Cup return a decade on, to put his Sabertek Team Red car into Superpole in third, alongside a great effort by AF Fans Team Red lass Tyler Robinson. Masters class man, Wayne Masters, appropriately enough, followed in his Ferro Energia car, from Fast 5 lad Mohammed Karodia. Team Red driver Roshaan Goodman in seventh however went through to the top six Superpole as Masters was left to head the separate Masters grid behind.

Victor however turned the tables on Loosemore to top Superpole by all of two hundredths of a second to line up on pole position. Karodia started third from Robinson, Smalberger and Goodman. Volkswagen Motorsport Rookie Cup winner Kyle Visser qualified seventh alongside Gqeberha lad Jeandre Marais’ Syrabix Team Red car, Ethan Coetzee’s JRT Racing Experience Polo, and rookie duo, Dr. Hannes Scheepers VCSA Dainfern Dental machine and Bjorn Bertholdt’s Sizanani Plastics entry.

Wayne Masters’ fifth overall saw him on pole for the over-50 Masters class. There was drama when second quickest man John Kruger’s Habot Oils Polo and Johan Gouws’ Keller Williams Realty car in sixth proved underweight to be sent to the back of the grid. That left Derick Smalberger’s Sabertek car second in Masters from ATE Brakes lady racer Elna Croeser, Mike Barbaglia’s PABAR car, Ferro Energia man Luigi Ferro, Kruger, and Gouws.

Victor led the first race from lights out, but Loosemore was all over him with Karodia, Robinson, Smalberger, Marais, Visser, Coetzee, Goodman and Scheepers in chase. Behind them, Masters led the over-50s from Smalberger and Kruger, who was soon up to second in his rapid charge from the back. Victor held Loosemore at bay up front, with Smalberger momentarily ahead of the wrought for third with Karodia, Robertson and Visser. Charl then just as quickly slipped back to sixth.

Rookie Visser was on the move and up to fourth behind Karodia before Robertson tangled with Smalberger to eliminate both. Loosemore’s best efforts could not best Victor’s local knowledge as Nathan held on to a tenth of a second maiden Astron Energy Polo Cup victory from Jason. Karodia held Visser off for fourth as Coetzee, Marais and Scheepers benefited the carnage. Bertholdt and Goodman mingled with the Masters.

John Kruger drove from the back to beat Wayne Masters to the line for the over-50 Masters win in eighth overall. Derrick Smalberger ended third in Masters from Elna Croeser, Mile Barbaglia, Johan Gouws, and Luigi Ferro.

Jason Loosemore went round the outside of pole man Nathan Victor through turn 1 to lead the second race. Victor and Charl Smalberger tangled into turn 2, to Charl’s detriment. So Loosemore led Victor, Karodia, Coetzee, Visser and Marais, as the strong headwind down the straight made it difficult to either escape or overtake. John Kruger was ahead of Masters, Derick Smalberger and Barbaglia in the over-50s when Nirav’s Singh slid into a sand trap to bring out the red flag.

Loosemore and Victor then fought an epic five-lap side-by-side nose-to-tail fight battle behind the Astron Energy Safety Polo restart. They swapped position several times en route to a photo finish which was decided Loosemore’s way. Karodia followed in third from Coetzee, Visser, Marais, Scheepers, Goodman, Smalberger and Bertholdt. Kruger edged Wayne Masters to the over-50s win with Derick Smalberger third. Barbaglia led a four car spat with Croeser, Gouws and Ferro to fourth.

Race 2 winner Jason Loosemore had done just enough to take the overall win from Nathan Victor, Mohammed Karodia, Volkswagen Motorsport rookie Kyle Visser, Ethan Coetzee and Jeandre Marais. John Kruger won the over-50 Masters day from Wayne Masters, Derick Smalberger, Elna Croeser, Mike Barbaglia and Johan Gouws. Astron Energy Polo Cup now heads to the Kyalami International Raceway’s blockbuster second round Extreme Festival on Saturday 13 April.

Ends.

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