

MASSIVE SUPPORT RACE PROGRAMME THRILLS SPECTATORS AT SAES NINE HOURS OF KYALAMI

REVIEW: SAES NINE HOURS OF KYALAMI SUPPORT RACES

KYALAMI GRAND PRIX CIRCUIT - 15 – 16 DECEMBER

The Southern African Endurance Series came of age at Kyalami this weekend with the running of the SAES Nine Hours of Kyalami attracting four support categories with 130 cars to keep the spectators and live TV audience enthralled as thrills and spills were the order of the day.

Silvercup 2.0

Heading the entry was a 46 strong field of Silvercup 2.0 cars, culled from various racing categories. The first race saw Renier Smith fight it out with fellow BMW M///Parts Championship contender Jagger Robertson for the lead. The young Viking backed Robertson squeezed onto pole position by 0.087 seconds, promising a thrilling race which is what the two drivers delivered.

Another BMW refugee, Oz Biagioni (BMW) ahead of Silvercup 2.0 club chairman Marius Jacobs in his AAA Recovery Centre Opel Tigra-Nissan. Riaan Draper, fiberglass bodywork panels flapping in the wind, brought his spaceframe Toyota home fifth overall and second in class A.

The strong BMW series had another of its regulars in sixth place with Bennie Luyt heading off Andre de Lange's Creative Ink VW. Giulia Airaga, a regular front-runner ended down in eighth ahead of Graeme King's VW Polo SupaCup and Kobus Brits' VW Polo.

Jagger Robertson turned the tables on the race one winner, beating out Renier Smith by a very close 1.23 seconds. Giulio Airaga bounced back to top the Silvercup runners in his Mazda-engined Opel Tigra spaceframe machine.

Reinhardt Miller, second overall in the BMW Club standings this year, took fourth from fellow BMW racer Luyt. Dirk Lawrence took fifth from Louis Cloete's ARC VW Beetle and de Lange's Polo. Michael Kernick took ninth in his Nash-VW and Dewald Smit's Amtec Fuels BMW rounded out the top 10.

Pabar VW Challenge

33 cars took part in the season-ending non-championship race at Kyalami. There was an invitational class of current specification VW polo Cup cars, several of which will be campaigned by Challenge driver's in next year's VW Polo Cup.

The top eight qualifiers were all Polo Cup cars, headed by Charl Smalberger who blitzed the field by nearly half a second. Nathan Victor, Dawie van der Merwe and Tyler Robinson completed the top four.

Stuart Mack headed the regular Challenge competitors from Miguel Dias' PMD Transport Polo and Chris Dale's PoziDrive Class A Polo.

Lee Thompson had a new Fast 5 Motorsport Polo Sedan out on track and planted it on the class B pole from the Dubcorp Polo of youngster Shiren Rajpaul.

Nathan Victor was never headed in his Summit Racing Polo Cup car, although it was a close fought race with Charl Smalberger 0.669 seconds behind and Tyler Robinson rounding out the podium a further 0.156 adrift.

Wayne Masters ended fourth in his Performance Masters Polo Cup, followed by Kyle Visser, Johan Gouws and the Pabar Polo Cup of Mike Barbaglia.

Stuart Mack used his developmental 3-cylinder 1 litre Polo to great effect, fending off the attentions of Miguel Dias. Lee Thompson narrowly beat Rajpaul by 0.2 seconds for class B honours while Andy Gossman, Michael Zapheriu and Philip Croeser slugged it out over the class C podium.

Race two was chaotic. A mid-pack nudge sent cars flying everywhere leaving Daniel Gammie broadside across the track and Jacques Hayes with nowhere to go. Cars went left and right to avoid the melee leaving Dawie van der Merwe out on the spot with damaged front suspension.

The race was red-flagged and once it got going again it was way more orderly. Victor again stole the show but it was Wayne Masters in second place from Robinson's Team Red Polo and Kyle Visser.

Stuart Mack once again topped the regular Challenge runners from Dean Ross' Norbrake Polo who won class A. Mydi Mfana (MDS Consulting Polo) took the second step of the 'A' podium while Thompson took class B again from Rajpaul and Hannes Scheepers' Dainfern Dental Clinic machine.

Class C produced the same result as the first race with Gossman ahead of Zapheriu and Croeser.

Lotus Challenge

A grid was established without qualifying so when the lights tuned green, the Lotus competitors barreled towards turn one four abreast where the biggest mover was Thomas Falkiner who went from the back of the class B field to second in the first half a lap. He and David Jermy had a furious scrap with Jeff Gable looking on. Such was the pace that fourth placed Clive Wilmott was 24 seconds back down the road with Andrew Kynaston and JP Nortje trailing in their wake.

Wesley Maxwell took class L honours from Sean Hepburn by a slender 0.13 seconds while Nick Hodgson completed the class podium a further 0.25 seconds adrift.

The second Lotus Challenge race saw David Jermy turn the tables with a relatively comfortable 3.9 seconds victory over Falkiner and Jeff Gable.

You could cover the top three class L runners with a proverbial blanket as Sean Hepburn just hung on to win over Hodgson and Maxwell, the three covered by 0309 seconds.

Falkiner took the third and final race by one second from Gable with Nortje by half a minute further back. Class L saw Maxwell win again from Hodgson and Hepburn, this time covered by a 'comfortable half a second.

GT Supercup

The privately run club event presented 28 cars to race over the weekend. Stuart Kidgell set the pace in his Ultima Alfa V6 turbo powered monster with Fabio Fedetto in tow. Anand Naidu took third in his BMW with Nick Naidoo close behind. Sun Moodley made a surprise entry in his SA GT Bigfoot Express Mercedes-AMG GT3.

When the first race got under way, Gerald Wright was squeezed in the wall, losing a chunk of bodywork off his Wright Motorsport Sports 200-Opel. He fought like a terrier but dropped down the order with his damage.

Fedetto went one better in the second race held in darkness and rain, taking line honours comfortably ahead of the BMW twins of Anand Naidu and Nick Naidoo. Kidgell was fourth ahead of the VW Polo SupaCup of Graeme King.

The final race was held early on Saturday morning. Kidgell finally got his Ultima over the line by a squeak under a second from Fedetto with Naidu half a minute back and Nick Naidoo breathing down his neck in fourth.

Fedetto won the GT1 class overall, with Anand Naidu taking the GT2 spoils, GT3 went to Jan van der Merwe, GT4 to Len Marshall, GT5 was awarded to Selvan Perumal and GT6 was taken by Mason Moodley.

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