

comsol vw challenge

1989 – 2015

2015 VW Challenge Back On Track



The 26th running of the VW Challenge got underway at the Midvaal Circuit on 14 February when 28 cars took to the circuit for the first round of the 2015 championship.

The top of the class A field had a familiar look to it during the early morning qualifying session but behind that a few surprises were in the mix. James Hurley

(The Starter Pack Company Polo) and Rory Atkinson (Comsol Polo) continued where they left off at the end of last year, the pair separated by just over fourteen hundredths of a second at the end of the session. This time it was the Comsol liveried car that would start from pole. Despite destroying his diff during the session, Iain Stevenson in the other Comsol Polo qualified third ahead of Louis Robbertse (Soulpro Polo) and Derick Smalberger in his Sabertek Beetle.

Nic Clarke (Central Technical Services Polo) had the perfect start to his VW Challenge career claiming the class B pole position from Daine Stewart (Grandmark Polo). Andre Needham (Polo) ended his session with a damaged gearbox but did enough early on to set the third quickest time ahead of Gerhard Henning (Polo).

Class C went the way of Andy Gossman (Polo) with Elke van Vledder (Golf) only six hundredths of a second slower in second. Zander Roos (Polo) was less than three hundredths further back in third with Shaun Crous (Polo) alongside him.



Hurley managed to grab the lead at the start of the first race but it was short lived. Atkinson fought his way through and set about opening a gap to the defending champion. From about half distance Hurley slowly started getting closer and managed to get back in front just before the flag came out. Smalberger took the final podium position ahead of Robbertse. After the race things changed somewhat. Hurley and Atkinson were both penalized for overtaking under yellow flags. This gave Smalberger the win with Robbertse in second. Hurley and Atkinson were classified third and fourth respectively.

Clarke used his pole position in class B to good effect and was never seriously challenged on his way to a comfortable maiden victory. Behind him there was a massive three-way battle for the runners-up spot between Henning, Daine Stewart and Brad Hall (Piazzo Motorsport Polo). They finished in that order but it could have gone to any of them – Henning and Stewart were separated by just a thousandth of a second at the flag. Needham did not start the race as he could not get his damaged gearbox repaired in time.



Gossman led the early class C battle with five or six cars behind him challenging for position. Crous and Zander Roos forced their way past Gossman and entertained the crowd with a close battle. Elke van Vledder also got past Gossman but could not close the gap to the leading duo and had to settle for third. Roos took the flag half a second ahead of Crous.

In the early stages of race 2 it looked like it was back to business as usual for Hurley as he set about building a lead from start. It was not to be, however, as a suspected electrical fault caused his car to cut out leaving him to coast back to the pits. Hurley's demise saw the two Comsol Polos running at the head of the field, Atkinson ahead of Stevenson with Smalberger's Beetle in close company. Smalberger eventually forced his way past Stevenson into second. Shortly thereafter Stevenson's race came to a premature end in turn 2 and Smalberger followed Atkinson to the flag. Robbertse came home in third.

In class B Brad Hall grabbed the early lead but Clarke got past on the second lap and went on to another easy win. Henning, Daine Stewart and Hall resumed their first race battle with the result ending the same way.



Class C saw some serious bumping and barging but Zander Roos again emerged at the head of the pack when the flag came out taking a fairly comfortable win from Elke van Vledder and Gossman.

Overall victory in class A went the way of Atkinson from Smalberger and Robbertse. Clarke secured class B from Henning and

Daine Stewart while class C belonged to Zander Roos ahead of Elke van Vledder and Shaun Crous.

The VW Challenge next returns to the circuit at Zwartkops on 21 March 2015.

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