

COMSOL VW CHALLENGE

1989 – 2016

Red Star challenges Comsol VWs

The sixth round of the 2016 Comsol VW Challenge took place at Red Star Raceway just outside Delmas on Saturday, 13 August. Although it was a new circuit for all the drivers Waldie Meintjes (LTR / Marty's Body & Spray Polo), Nic Clarke (Central Technical Services Polo) and Shaun Crous (Ancro Building Projects Polo) didn't let that worry them as they all took double wins in their respective classes.



Class A qualifying saw championship leader Tasmin Pepper (Campos Transport / Alpine Motors Polo) put in a blistering lap to claim pole position. She was over a second quicker than Meintjes (LTR / Marty's Body & Spray Polo) who just got the better on Rory Atkinson (Comsol Polo). Capetonian Stiaan Kriel (Imperial Select Polo) was next up but a penalty for his coming

together with Pepper at Zwartkops saw him moved to the back of the class A grid. This moved Iain Stevenson (Comsol Polo) up to fourth with James Hurley (The Starter Pack Company Polo) and Devan Piazza-Musso (Allegiance Polo) sharing the third row of the grid.

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There was a surprise at the head of the class B field. Michael Harris (SA Lube Polo) just got the better of Darren Nathan (Sextrader Polo) to grab his first ever VW Challenge pole position. Defending champion Clarke (Central Technical Services Polo) heads the second row alongside Adrian Wood (Laserfische Polo). The Stewart brothers, Mile and Daine, round out the top six in their RCS Security Services Polos.

Crous (Ancro Building Projects Polo) took class C from Zander Roos (Nathan's Motorsport Polo) with championship leader Elke van Vledder, out this time in a Golf II instead of the Golf I she normally drives, in third. Graham Savage (Goldwagen JHB CBD and Wynberg Golf) looked to be regaining some of his early season form with a solid fourth place. Wouter Roos (Nathan's Motorsport Polo) and Duncan Marais (Golf) were fifth and sixth respectively.

Unfortunately for Pepper her pole position did not translate into points in the first race. As she changed into second gear from the start a side shaft failed leaving her stranded on the side of the road and allowing Meintjes through into the lead. He didn't need a second invitation and was never seriously challenged on his way to a comfortable win. Piazza-Musso led the chasing pack in the early stages with Comsol team mates Stevenson and Atkinson in close attendance.

Atkinson got through to second which he held until the flag. Piazza-Musso crossed the line in third but had 30 seconds added to his race time after he was adjudged to have jumped the start. This dropped him down to eighth and promoted Kriel to third. Stevenson was classified fourth ahead of Wayne Masters (Polo) who made a welcome return to VW Challenge racing. Wayne Crous (King Price Polo) finished in sixth.

In class B, as has been the case most of the way through the season, it was Clarke and Nathan at the head of the field. This time Clarke was able to pull a slight gap and took the win by just over three seconds. Nathan was followed home by Wood with pole-sitter Harris having to settle for fourth. Mile Stewart just managed to stay in front of Jacques Smith (Hydra Arc Polo) to claim fifth.



Class C was the only one where the pole position was converted to a win. Crous got off the line cleanly and pulled away from the rest of the field, taking his maiden VW Challenge win by over ten seconds. Zander Roos was the best of the rest with Savage not far behind. Wouter Roos was next up followed by Christiaan de Wet (Polo) and van Vledder.

In race 2 it was again Meintjes who opened up a substantial gap over the chasing pack on his way to his second win of the day. Hurley, who didn't make it to the start line in the opening race due to a misfire, and Pepper both started at the back of the grid but after a couple of laps were fighting each other for second. Pepper's run of bad luck

continued however, and she came to a halt with gearbox problems. The electrical gremlins that plagued Hurley on the way to the start of the opening race stayed away and he crossed the line in second.

It looked like Kriel was going to get his second podium of the day but his clutch failed in the closing stages. While he was able to make it to the finish line, he could not keep Atkinson behind him and had to settle for fourth. Piazza-Musso and Stevenson rounded out the top six.

Nathan had a poor start in the class B race and had to fight his way through the field to get close to Clarke. While he did manage to get past everyone else, he could not get ahead of Clarke and had to settle for another second place. Wood and Harris were again in third and fourth respectively while Smith managed to get the better of Mile Stewart this time around.



Crous had another untroubled run to victory in class C but, behind him, things got a bit frantic. Contact between van Vledder and John Johnstone Johnstone (Circle Solar Solutions Polo) saw van Vledder parked on the side of the track at turn 3 with a puncture while Savage ended up in the tyre barrier. Once the dust had settled it was Wouter Roos and de Wet who took the

other two podium positions. Former champion Lyle Ramsay (Monroe Polo) returned to the series after a season in Engen VW Cup and claimed fourth ahead of Sam Dale (Dale Automation Polo) and Stuart Mack (Goldwagen JHB CBD and Wynberg Golf).

The next round of the Comsol VW Challenge takes place at the Killarney Raceway in Cape Town on 24 September 2016.

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