

# VW Challenge

1989 – 2017

## Veterans meet the Phakisa challenge



The VW Challenge has always provided an interesting blend of experience and youth, but at the fifth round of the 2017 championship, held at Phakisa Freeway on Saturday, 22 July, it was the veterans who emerged at the head of the field. Iain Pepper's Husqvarna Motorcycles Polo had a misfire during Friday practice but the team managed to sort it out overnight and he was able to take both class A wins. The younger drivers were not completely excluded however, with the class B wins going to Adrian Wood

(Laserfische Polo) and class C going the way of Rory Atkinson (Pozidrive Polo).

Pepper indicated his intentions during Saturday morning's qualifying session when he posted a time just over eight tenths quicker than class A championship leader Stiaan Kriel (Spanjaard Polo). Waldie Meintjes (LTR / Marty's Body & Spray Polo) has experience more than his fair share of mechanical maladies this season, but seemed to have overcome them when he claimed third on the grid ahead of Devon Piazza Musso (Allegiance / Reef Supplies Polo) with Wayne Crouse (Delway Polo) and Wayne Masters (Performance Masters Polo) rounding out the top six.

In class B defending champion Nic Clarke (Pozidrive Polo) blew his motor before he completed a lap in qualifying, bringing a premature end to his race day. In his absence Wood grabbed pole from Lyle Ramsay (Monroe Racing RSA Polo) with Quinton Needham (Megatron Polo) in third. Needham was penalized for a technical infringement after the session and dropped to the back of the grid which moved Jacques Smith (Hydra Arc Polo) to the head of the second row alongside Deon Holliday Jnr (Centworx / Centparts Polo). Luan Roos (Nathan's Motorsport Polo) and Christiaan de Wet (Polo) filled the third row.

Atkinson was comfortably quicker than the rest of the class C brigade, taking pole position from Shaun Crous (Ancro Building Projects Polo) and Chris Dale (Pozi Drive Polo). Sam Dale (Pozidrive



Polo), making his first appearance of the season, was fourth ahead of Piet Potgieter (Polo) and Wouter Roos (Strata Drilling Polo).

In the opening race Pepper took full advantage of his pole position, opening up an early lead and then controlling things from the front to take a comfortable class A win from Kriel with Meintjes in third, just ahead of Piazza Musso. Masters got the better of Wayne Crous to take fifth.

In class B Wood took a lights-to-flag win from Ramsay who just didn't have the pace to challenge the class leader. Smith and Holliday were involved in a scrap for the final podium position in the early laps but a clutch problem sidelined Holliday leaving Smith to chase Ramsay home. Needham fought his way through the field to take fourth ahead of Andre Calitz (AC Honed Group Polo) and de Wet.



Atkinson was untouchable at the head of class C, going on to win by almost 10 seconds, but the three-way battle behind him for the minor placings was the highlight of the race. Chris Dale was at the head of that fight when it counted, taking second place from Roos with Sam Dale in fourth. Potgieter and Greg Gossman (Golf) rounded out the top six.

Pepper didn't get a great start to the second race, allowing Kriel through into the lead, but after some fairly robust jockeying for position, Pepper worked his way through to the front with Meintjes also getting past Kriel. Pepper was again able to control things from the front to take a comfortable win with Meintjes, who had his best race weekend of the season. Kriel had to settle for third ahead of Piazza Musso with Gavin Ross (Norbrake Polo) and Shaun Neill (Delmon Mining & Civils Polo) in fifth and sixth respectively.

Class B was again a battle between Wood and Ramsay at the head of the field with Wood able to keep the Monroe car behind him to take his second win of the day. Behind the leading pair Smith and Needham were in a fight for the final podium spot in the early stages, but Needham dropped back allowing Smith to again chase Ramsay home. Needham eventually finished fifth behind Calitz with Luan Roos rounding out the top six.

Atkinson was again untouchable at the front of the class C field in race 2, this time taking the win from Shun Crous and Chris Dale. Sam Dale took another fourth place ahead of Wouter Roos and Gossman.

With five of the season's nine scheduled races complete the overall championship is still up for grabs. Atkinson and Wood are heading the log with Kriel six points behind them in third. Pepper's



full house of points at Phakisa has moved him up to fourth place ahead of Ramsay with Clarke dropping to sixth.

In class A Kriel leads the way from Pepper and Piazza Musso. Wood has extended his lead at the head of class B with Ramsay moving up to second ahead of Clarke. Atkinson has a comfortable lead at the top of the class C standings with Shaun Crous and Wouter Roos fighting it out for the runner's up spot.

The VW Challenge competitors next take to the track on the first weekend in September when they make their way to Red Star Raceway just outside Delmas.

The VW Challenge would like to acknowledge the valuable support of their sponsors, ATE Brakes, Dicktator Engine Management Systems, Tron Lubricants, Glasfix Windscreen Repairs and Norbrake, who make the series possible.

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