

VW Challenge

1989 – 2017

Championship leaders extend their advantage at Midvaal

All three class championship leaders extended their advantage over their closest rivals at the seventh round of the 2017 VW Challenge championship held at Midvaal Raceway on Saturday, 14 October. Rory Atkinson (Pozidrive Polo) had a relatively easy run to two class C wins but both Iain Pepper (Husqvarna Motorcycles Polo) and Adrian Wood (Laserfische Polo) had to fight hard for their double victories.



The morning qualifying session was interrupted by a red flag after the grass on the side of the track caught alight after one of the competitors spun and his hot exhaust ignited the undergrowth, but Delon Thompson (MF Polo) didn't let that worry him. The youngster grabbed the class A pole from Pepper by just under a tenth of a second. Stiaan Kriel (Spanjaard Polo) and Wayne Crous (Delway Polo) filled the second row of the grid with

Devon Piazza Musso (Allegiance / Reef Supplies Polo) and Waldie Meintjes (Marty's Body & Spray Polo) in fifth and sixth. Just under a second covered the top six.

The top four in class B were covered by less than four-tenth of a second, Wood leading the way from Lyle Ramsay (Monroe Racing RSA Polo), Deon Holliday Jnr (Centworx Polo) and Nic Clarke (PoziDrive Polo). Jacques Smith (Hydra Arc Polo) and Andre Calitz (AC Honed Group Polo) rounded out the top six.

Atkinson was the comfortably the quickest of the class C competitors, taking pole position from Simon Levin (Auto ECU Polo) who was just 0.047" quicker than Chris Dale (Pozidrive Polo). Shaun



Crous (Ancro Building Projects Polo) was next up with Gareth Lyke (Gaz-O-Matic Polo) and Alistair Johnston (Polo) filling the third row of the grid.

Thompson couldn't convert his pole position to an advantage at the start of the first race; too much wheel spin at the start saw him drop to fourth, behind Pepper, Kriel and Crous. He fought his way past Crous and then set about getting past Kriel which he did when Kriel left a slight gap. Pepper by that stage had a comfortable lead, despite a safety car period while the marshals moved one of the class C cars, and Thompson had to settle for second behind the veteran. Kriel took the final podium step ahead of Piazza Musso, who got past Crous in the latter stages of the race. Meintjes, despite having gearbox problems, brought his Polo home in sixth.

In class B Wood was able to withstand the pressure from Ramsay to take the win by almost eight-tenths of a second. Clarke just didn't have the pace to run with the front two but still managed a fighting third ahead of Holliday. Smith ended the race in a somewhat lonely fifth place with Luan Roos (Nathan's Motorsport Polo) in sixth.



Contact between Levin and Dale in the first corner of the opening class C race shook up the field a bit and allowed Atkinson to open a gap at the front. He was chased by Shaun Crous until a wheel bearing on his car failed, promoting Dale to second. Lyke ended in third ahead of Johnston with Crous the last of the classified finishers in fifth.

Thompson again had a poor start from pole position in the second class A race, dropping down to fourth behind Kriel, Pepper and Crous. While Pepper was doing his best to get past Kriel, Thompson and Crous were engaged in a battle for the final podium position. While Pepper was able to get past Kriel, things didn't end as well for Thompson and Crous. They tangled at the end of the straight, putting both of them out of the race. This left Piazza Musso to take third ahead of Meintjes with Quinton Needham (Megatron Polo) and Bob Neill (Aerial Surveys Polo) in fifth and sixth places.

Nic Clarke's second race came to a premature end when he could not avoid contact with a spinning Holliday in the opening corner. Their misfortune allowed Wood and Ramsay to pull away at the front of the field. Wood led the early stages before Ramsay found a way through to the lead. Wood didn't give up though and stayed on Ramsay's bumper until he left just a small gap. Wood re-took the lead and held it until the flag a couple of laps later. Smith worked his way through the field to take third ahead of Roos, a recovering Holliday and Lindsay Clur (Mirage Polo).



Atkinson had another easy win in class C, this time ahead of Shaun Crous. Gareth Lyke picked up another podium finish with Johnston in fourth.

In the day's overall results Pepper claimed the class A win from Kriel and Piazza Musso. Class B went to Wood with Ramsay and Smith completing the podium while Atkinson was the easy class C victor ahead of Lyke and Johnston.

The VW Challenge brigade now move to the Kyalami Grand Prix Circuit for the eighth round of the 2017 championship which takes place on Saturday, 4 November.

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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