

VW Challenge

1989 – 2017

Champions crowned at Kyalami

Two of the 2017 Amada VW Challenge class championships were decided at the penultimate round of the season which was held at Kyalami Grand Prix Circuit on Saturday, 4 November. Rory Atkinson (PoziDrive Polo) continued his dominance of class C, taking another two race wins on his way to the title. Adrian Wood (Laserfische Polo) has had to work hard for his wins this year, but managed another double victory at Kyalami to claim the class B crown. In class A the fight will go down to the wire with Iain Pepper (Husqvarna Motorcycles / Lee Thompson Racing Polo) leading Stiaan Kriel (Spanjaard Polo) by a dozen points.



Kriel was quickest throughout Friday's practice sessions and it was no surprise when he claimed pole position late on Friday afternoon. He was just under three tenths quicker than Pepper with Waldie Meintjes (Marty's Body & Spray Polo) and Wayne Crous (Delway Polo) on the second row. Devon Piazza Musso (Allegiance / Reef Supplies Polo) and Delon Thompson (MF Autobody Polo) rounded out the top six in class A.

Wood was the quickest of the class B runners, taking pole position from Lyle Ramsay (Monroe Racing RSA Polo). Nic Clarke (PoziDrive Polo) and Jacques Smith (Hydra Arc Polo) were separated by less than 0.2" in third and fourth with Deon Holliday Jnr (Centworx Polo) and Francois van Zyl (Jesus Saves Polo) filling the third row of the grid.

Atkinson had yet to be beaten in a class C qualifying session this year as he headed to Kyalami and he continued that run on Friday afternoon, claiming his eighth pole position of the season. He was joined on the front row by Shaun Crous (Ancro Building Projects Polo) with Chris Dale (PoziDrive Polo) and Alistair Johnstone (WAR Racing Polo) on the next row. Gareth Lyke (Gaz-O-Matic Polo) and Wouter Roos (Strata Drilling Golf) ended the session in fifth and sixth respectively.



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In the opening race it was all about Kriel and Pepper at the head of the field until the half way mark when the pair made contact. Pepper was unable to continue, leaving Kriel an untroubled passage to the flag. Unfortunately for Kriel, he was deemed to have been the cause of the collision which eliminated Pepper and, in terms of the VW Challenge rules, was placed behind the veteran in the results, effectively resulting in a DNF. The battle for second on the road between Piazza Musso and Meintjes ended up being the fight for the win with the former taking victory by a couple of car lengths. Wayne Crous took the final podium position. Quinton Needham (Megatron Polo) took fourth ahead of Shaun Neill (Delmon Mining Polo) and Andre Calitz, making his first class A appearance in his AC Honed Group Polo.

Defending champion Clarke was forced to withdraw from the class B battle with mechanical troubles leaving Wood, Ramsay and Smith to run nose-to-tail at the front of the field for much of the race. They finished in that order although Wood was able to open up a bit of a gap in the latter stages of the race. Holliday continued his run of points-paying positions with fourth place ahead of van Zyl and Luan Roos (Strata Drilling Polo).



As he has done so many times this season, Atkinson grabbed the class C lead as the lights went out and was never challenged on his way to yet another comfortable win. He was followed home by Shaun Crous who had Dale on his bumper. Greg Gossman (PoziDrive Golf) worked his way up to fourth ahead of Johnstone and Lyke.

Race 2 again saw Kriel and Pepper at the head of the class A pack, although this time they managed to avoid race-ending contact. Kriel again took the flag but this time was excluded for a technical infringement which handed Pepper the win. Meintjes got the better of Piazza Musso this time to take second with Wayne Crous in fourth place. Needham had a somewhat lonely run to fifth with Neill rounding out the top six.

Wood, Ramsay and Smith continued where they had left off after the first class B race, running with not much more than a couple of car lengths between them until the latter stages of the race where Wood was again able to pull away slightly at the front. Ramsay and Smith again took the minor podium placings. Holliday took fourth place and was again followed over the line by van Zyl and Roos.



Atkinson again dominated class C, taking the second race win from Johnstone and Dale. Shaun Crous and Lyke were fourth and fifth.

In the overall standings results Meintjes took class A from Piazza Musso and Wayne Crous. In a repeat of the Class B result at Midvaal, overall victory went to Wood with Ramsay and Smith completing the podium while Atkinson was the easy class C victor ahead of Dale and Shaun Crous.

The final round of the 2017 Amada VW Challenge series takes place at Zwarkops Raceway, west of Pretoria on Saturday, 25 November.

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

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