



SPECIAL VEHICLE LEADERS WIN VRYBURG 450 QUALIFYING RACE

Vryburg, Friday – Championship leaders Quintin and Kallie Sullwald won the Special Vehicle category qualifying race that produced some up and down results at the Vryburg 450, round six of the Donaldson Cross Country Championship, here today.

The Sullwald father and son combination, in the Elegant Fuel BAT Venom, suffered an alternator problem from the start of the 100 kilometre route, but managed to open up a gap of 27 seconds over former champions Evan Hutchison and Danie Stassen in the Motorite Racing BAT Viper. After a disappointing season this weekend is make or break for Hutchison and Stassen – but behind them is where the fun started.

A gap of six minutes and 25 seconds separated Force Fuel 450 winners Laurence du Plessis and Gielie le Roux, in a Zarco, and the race winners. Sandwiched between first and third were no fewer than 10 Production Vehicle entries.

“The route is sandy and very fast, and we were worried thought by an alternator problem,” said Kallie Sullwald. “So far so good, but it is going to be a hot and dusty race.”

Temperatures were peaking in the late 30s and added to the difficulty factor for crews. Hutchison and Stassen reported a clean run with the reigning champions commenting that it was about time they deserved a little luck.

Fourth were Class P leaders John Thomson and Maurice Zermatten (Zarco) with the pair also the first Class P crew to cross the finish line. Behind them KwaZulu-Natal crew Daniel Brookes and Gavan Gray were a steady fifth in the Ducatis Property BAT, but they were a whopping seven minutes and 57 seconds behind the Sullwalds.

Sixth went to Gerhard du Plessis and his teenage son Hardus, in a Jimco, with a five minute penalty not doing their day any good. Without the penalty they would have significantly closed their six minute and 25 second gap on the leaders.

Next up were Botswana crew Keith du Toit and former S1600 SA National Rally Champion Robbie Coetzee, who was having his first taste of cross country racing. The Botswana pair were around three minutes clear of Andre Fourie and Hendriekus Pienaar (PHB BAT) with the North West pair finishing ahead of James Watson/John Thompson (BAT) with the KZN crew the second Class P crew home.

Veterans Rob Wark and Ashley Thorn (K9 Racing Aceco), who will have fond memories of Vryburg when it hosted the Total Trans Kalahari and Toyota Desert Race in years gone by, completed the top 10 and were on the Class P podium. Wark is a former Toyota Desert Race winner in a singleseater.

Race headquarters, the start/finish and designated service park are all located at the Vryburg Moto Club, on the outskirts of the town, with the race scheduled to start at 08:00. Public entry to race headquarters and spectator viewing points along the route is free of charge.

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