**ZWARTKOPS’ SPECTACULAR SEASON SIGN OFF**

*Great racing thills Pretoria as a 2023 season comes to a close*

Threatening rain and red flag delays could not dampen a brilliant day’s racing as Zwartkops Raceway delivered some spectacular Regional Festival Grand Final motor racing in Pretoria on Saturday.

Franco Scribante’s almighty Porsche pipped pole man Stuart White to win the opening G+H Extreme Supercar race by 0.4 seconds. The similar Lamborghinis of Silvio Scribante and Jonathan du Toit were next home from Xolile Letlaka in an Aston Martin and Charl Joubert’s Lotus. Charl Arangies took the opening Class A win driving a Ferrari this weekend, while Uli Sanne’s BMW took C and Andrew van Vuuren won Class D. White then took the second heat from Silvio Scribante, du Toit, Franco Scribante, Joubert and Ricky Giannoccaro. But it was Charl Arangies who did the Class A double to clinch the overall 2023 championship.

The Mobil 1 V8 Supercars proved a day of the champions as recently crowned champion career Julian Fameliaris’ Corvette held Jaguar XKR V8 duo Mackie Adlem and Franco di Matteo and Terry Wilford’s Mustang off for the opening race win. Fifth placed Antonie Marx beat Steve Herbst to GT2 honours. Multiple champion Mackie Adlem then signed off an illustrious V8 racing career by winning his final race from di Matteo, Warren Lombard, Marius van der Berg and GT2 man Steve Herbst, who clinched the class title with a win.

Class C lad Yotti Nousias meanwhile claimed the overall 2023 Pabar VW Challenge over Class A champion Rory Atkinson, while Hannes Scheepers snaked to another Class B title. Pole man Charl Smalberger ground to a halt before early leader Atkinson was overcome by brothers Bevin and Wayne Masters who ultimately took the first heat from Rory. Wayne Maters then won the second race from brother Bevin and Atkinson. Scheepers survived a scare when he failed to start the first heat as Mo Karodia came from the back to beat Stelio Nousias and Shiren Rajpaul to the win before Nousias turned the tables on Karodia in race 2. Overall champion Yotti Nousias and Andy Gossman shared out the Class C wins.

Josh le Roux and Leon Loubser each took a BMW M Performance Parts Race Series Class A wins as Loubser claimed the overall championship. Nek Makris won the opening B race from Rob Gearing and Mansoor Parker before Reiner Smith beat Makris and Jaco Storm to heat 2 victory. Anand Naidu took his first C win from Ryan Naicker, Bennie Luyt and Anwar Levy, before Niel Pillay put one over Naidu and Naicker in heat 2. Guest driver George Economides won the opening D and E race from Reinhardt Miller and Nicholas Herbst before Lenard Archer beat Economides and Herbst to the D second win. A Joker penalty saw Mike Grobler win the opening E race from Jacques Claassens, Mariaan Emmenis and van Heerden, who bounced back to take heat 2 from Grobler and Emmenis.

On two wheels, Trevor Westman pipped Damion Purificati to the opening SunBet ZX10 Masters race win with Jayson Lamb third from Graeme van Breda, Nicole van Aswegen, Brian Bontekoning and Hein McMahon, Johan le Roux, David Veringa and Wayne Shelley in chase. Race 2 delivered the same top four in a similar race, but Bontekoning beat Pieter de Vos to fifth from van Aswegen, McMahon, le Roux, and Veringa next home.

Lendl Jansen took double DOE Formula Vee partnered with CIM Lubri Fuel race wins. MD Bester beat Jansen’s championship rival Jaco Schriks to second in the opening heat, with Peter Hills, Gert van den Berg, Brandon Hills, Shaun van der Linde and Theodore Vermaak in chase. Jansen then beat Peter Hills and Schriks to the second race win, but that was not enough to prevent Schriks from taking the 2023 title. Van den Berg, Brandon Hills, Kyle Watt, van der Linde and Vermaak followed them home in race 2.

Jean-Pierre van der Walt’s Audi won both Car Care Clinic 111 races from Louis Scholtz’ Golf. Phillip Meyer’s Porsche was third in race 1 from Gerhard Henning, Dawie Olivier and Mark du Toit. George Economides’ Golf then put one over Henning, Olivier, and Archer‘s BMWs in heat 2. Piet Potgieter and Francois Henning shared out the Class A wins, and Wayne Masters, and Ismail Peck the B victories, while Lady drivers Melanie Spurr and Elke van Vledder did the D and E doubles. Tiaan Esterhuizen won both times in E and Maritz le Roux and Jonathan Visser were the Class X winners. Running with the 111s, Karel Stols’ Etios took both Superhatch wins from Francis Aldrich and Quintus Viljoen as George Aldrich won Class B.

All of which closes off another brilliant South African circuit motor racing season. It all fires up once again with the spectacular annual Zwartkops Passion for Speed Festival on Saturday 27 January. The 2024 Regional Festival season then gets going, once again at Zwartkops on 9 March, before the 2024 National Extreme Festival year commences at Killarney in Cape Town on Saturday 15 March…