**SA RALLY TO LIGHT UP BRONKHORSTSPRUIT**

*Potgieter & du Toit lead, but anything can happen in rallying!*

While JJ Potgieter and Tommy du Toit hold a sizeable lead in the South African National Rally Championship powered by MRF Tyres, both men understand full well that anything can, and probably will happen in rallying. All of which makes the Bronkhorstspruit double-header into a nail biter of note over the weekend of October 13 and 14!

With a maximum of 80 points on offer at Bronkhorstspruit, and a similar tally also available at Dullstroom finale in November, Hyundai R4 duo Potgieter and du Toit sit 85 points clear of their nearest title rivals. Their objective is therefore clearly to maintain, or increase their advantage, and wrap that title up this weekend. The rest of the pack will however want to cut that deficit, and keep the title chase open into the finale.

NRC1 all-wheel drive championship leaders JJ and Tommy have the additional advantage of their closest title rivals at this stage being Habig and Barry White in their front-wheel drive NRC2 class leading Just Tools Volkswagen Polo. Closest NRC 1 rivals, reigning South African Champions, Chris Coertse and Greg Godrich sit a further ten points adrift in the Rally Technic Mazda2.

Coertse and Godrich will be out to rack a significant points haul up at Bronkhorstspruit after a previous Tzaneen Rally crash left their Mazda looking somewhat worse for wear. “We are almost finished the rebuild and hope to test before the start,” Coertse explained. “We must be sure that our shunt never left any hidden issues, and also prepare to mount a serious challenge in Bronkies.”

Third in the NRC 1 chase and fourth overall, the Swazi Cowboy Jono van Wyk and Nico Swartz and their Gazoo Racing Toyota Starlet still have a mathematical chance of stealing the title. To achieve that would however mean a double disaster for the leaders. Jono and Nico’s title hopes took a knock when they suffered engine failure on Friday at Tzaneen, and the team was unable to mend it in time for Saturday’s start.

Gazoo Racing Starlet teammates Mandla Mdakane Kes Naidoo however repaired their car after going out on that Tzaneen Friday. That allowed them to fight back on Saturday and close within five points of their teammates. “The team has rebuilt our car and added some new tweaks, so it should be well sorted,” Kes Naidoo explained. “Bronkhorstspruit will be fast and very exciting for the spectators, and for us in the car too.”

The NRC2 battle tight. Ford Fiesta R2 crew Gustav Potgieter and Carolyn Swann sit 47 points off Habig and White in the chase, but a mere five points clear of Gerald Klopper and Johan Aucamp’s Toyota Etios. They in turn hold a 13-point advantage over Nico and Juandre Nienaber’s similar car, with lady driver Magriet Potgieter and Rikus Fourie’s Fiesta R2 another six points adrift, following terminal engine issues in Tzaneen.

The Bronkhorstspruit Rally will as ever be run as two separate rounds of the championship. One full rally happens on Friday 20 October, with a second rally on its own on Saturday. Not only does that provide many great spectator opportunities over the two days, but it also throws hapless rally crews a chance to repair their cars overnight and return to action in a fresh round on Saturday.

Both days start at 10:45, with stages 1, 2, 4 and 5 on the Vlakfontein Road off the R25. The famous Skietbaan stage offers great spectator opportunities on Rusfontein just off the R25 towards Groblersdal. Stages 3 and 6 will run close to the Witklip Farm Service Park on the Arbor Road.

Crews will complete just over 85 km on each day. National Competitors will rally 170 km over the two days, with Northern Regions Regional Competitors joining Saturday’s rally for their 85 km fourth round. Follow sarallychamps on Facebook for more information and updates on the Bronkhorstspruit South African National Championship Rally powered by MRF Tyres.