**PEPSON PLASTICS KAWASAKI BACK IN BUSINESS**

*Team Green’s comeback kings & winning champions*

Pepson Plastics Kawasaki Factory Racing with Michelin, Motul and Scottish Cables got its 2024 Cross Country Motorcycle season off to a flying start at the GXCC Gauteng championship opener at Lekoa Lodge in the Free State on Sunday. The team picked up where it left off with one of its champion riders straight back to his winning ways, while another team rider made a triumphant return.

“Out Masters champion Pieter Holl smoked them again on Saturday, while D'artagnan Lobjoit made a stunning return with third overall while filling in for Taki Bogiages on his first time back in the saddle in anger in over two years,” Pepson Plastics Kawasaki team boss Ian Pepper confirmed. Others to impress were Wade Den in fourth OR1, while Ryan Angilley had a good ride to fourth in OR3, and Geoff Den won Vets.

“Jake Pretorius was third on his first time out aboard a 250 in OR4, stepping up from an 85 last year, while Jayden Boyce had good ride in OR3 Pro-Am and Dylan Human had a positive day in 85cc Juniors.

“Jaycee Nienaber’s bike unfortunately had a harness wire break on fuel pump relay, which caused him to retire while out front on lap 1. Cameron Becker stood in for Wian Wentzel and was leading OR3 after 3 laps, when he knocked his chin on bars and I would not let him go out again “Wian is not yet fully recovered, so he only started to allow this to count as a drop race.”

D'artagnan Lobjoit’s stunning comeback was however among the highlights of the Villiers race. “Iain Pepper rang me up a month ago to ask if I wanted to fill in for Taki Bogiages on a few GXCC races this year,” Lobjoit explained. “Then Taki called a week ago to let me know he was injured and I grabbed the opportunity to ride with both hands.

“So, with no training and less than ten hours riding in two years, I arrived with no expectations and just went out to have a blast on the Pepson Plastics Kawasaki KX450X. My start was mediocre, but I charged hard and surprised myself with an overall podium third. I was blown away with the bike’s speed and handling and happy to say that I’ll be back racing the full season ahead! I can’t thank Pepson Plastics Kawasaki Factory Racing and all our sponsors enough for making this comeback dream come true!”

“It was great to re-join my Pepson Plastics Kawasaki Factory Racing team for the season-opening GXCC today,” Pieter Holl admitted. “The guys were once again just awesome, my Kawasaki and its suspension worked wonders, the pit crew and the guys who service the bike and set up pits were on point throughout and it all came together for another win at Lekoa Lodge today. Huge thanks to Iain Pepper for keeping this special wheel turning!

“It was great to be back at the races with the team after over 18 months of injuries,” Wade Den explained. “So a big thank you to Pepson Plastics Kawasaki Factory Racing and First Capital Bank Botswana for all their help in getting the season rolling. Looking forward to building on this as the season goes on.”

“I have been working hard since I came back to race Cross Country with Pepson Plastics Kawasaki Factory Racing last year, and it is starting to pay off with today’s fourth in OR3,” Ryan Angilley admitted. “I’m now really starting to get into the swing of the cross country style of racing and thoroughly enjoyed this weekend, so I can’t wait I be back and fighting for podiums and wins.”

“The season got off to a good start at the Lekoa Lodge GXCC regional opener,” Iain Pepper concluded. “Now we look forward to keeping the momentum going into the second round on 16 March.”

***Pepson Plastics Kawasaki*** *races with* ***Michelin*** *tyres,* ***Motul*** *lubricants,* ***Scottish Cables, Bikewise*** *accessories and* ***Arai*** *helmets.*