



TOTAL TOUR NATAL RALLY : 6 – 7 MARCH 2010

Fekken wins drama filled Total Tour Natal Rally

The Total Tour Natal Rally provided a dramatic start to the National Rally championship, a season that promises to be the most intriguing in over a decade.

Ignoring the drama going on behind them, Volkswagen's Hergen Fekken and Pierre Arries started their title defence off with a well judged win.

With 18 of the 41 car field competing for overall honours in the top S2000 class, rallying in South Africa has never been so competitive. From the start in Umhlanga, crews headed to the cane fields near Stanger for the first of four timed special stages before heading for the overnight stop at Sun Coast Casino.

The first car on the road was the Toyota Auris of Mark Cronje and Robert Paisley but they had the disadvantage of sweeping the road for those behind.

Volkswagen's Enzo Kuun and Guy Hodgson took full advantage and won the first two stages with teammates Jannie Habig/Ralph Pitchford and Hergen Fekken/ Pierre Arries taking turns in second place.

Fekken then won stage three with Kuun taking the final test of the day to go into day two with a four second advantage over Fekken as a very sensible drive from Cronje saw him end in 3rd place. World Rally Championship refugee, Conrad Rautenbach and Peter Marsh ended 4th in their Subaru with Toyota's Johnny Gemmell/Drew Sturrock and Habig/Pitchford rounding off the top six.

The main drama of the day came when Team Total's Mohammed Moosa and Grant Martin gently slid off the road in stage four with the hot exhaust of the Toyota Auris causing a grass fire which delayed the stage. There were also problems for Team Total's other S2000 contenders Fernando Rueda/Dave Lewkowicz (Toyota RunX) who exited the final stage with a deranged rear suspension but hung onto tenth place while JP Damseaux and Carolyn Swan lost around two minutes on stage three to end the day in fourteenth place.

The next day cars set off from the Sun Coast complex at 07h00 for eight special stages in the Scottburgh/Park Rynie region.

It was a day of drama and attrition as there were a number of high profile accidents. After SS 7, the new Ford Fiesta S2000 of Charl Wilken and Greg Godrich was destroyed in a fire whilst on its way to the central service area and was totally gutted.

In the afternoon there was drama in SS10 when Schalk Burger and Armand du Toit crashed their Toyota RunX into a river and Burger was airlifted to hospital with suspected back injuries. Minutes later Team Total's Moosa and Martin rolled their Toyota Auris heavily at the same corner and Martin had to be taken to hospital by road.

Fekken and Arries kept their cool to win with a 24-second margin over teammates Kuun and Hodgson. Third went to Toyota's Mark Cronje and Robert Paisley with Conrad Rautenbach and Peter Marsh just missing the podium in their Subaru.

A steady drive saw the Toyota crew of Japie van Niekerk and Robin Houghton take fifth ahead of Nicholas Ryan and Geoff Tyrer in a VW Polo.

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