

Total Tour Natal Rally to thrill motorsport fans

In a departure from the norm, and something that is sure to thrill rally fans, the event takes place over Saturday and Sunday 6 - 7 March 2010. Chairman of the NMCC Total Tour Natal organising committee, Richard Vaughan, says safety considerations were the primary reason.



“On Friday and Saturday the Subaru Sani2C mountain bike race takes place on the same land that we use on the south coast. We cannot risk cars and bikes getting lost and meeting up in the sugar cane, so we have decided to run south coast stages on Sunday.”

As in previous years the Tour Natal will start at the Gateway Theatre of Shopping in Umhlanga on Friday evening morning before heading out for four gravel special stages on the north coast area on Saturday.

Treat for spectators

The cars return to Sun Coast Casino complex on Saturday evening where there will be a treat for spectators. Sunday morning the surviving crews head for the South Coast stages where they face seven special stages. The finish is back at Sun Coast on Sunday afternoon.

Reigning champions Hergen Fekken and navigator Pierre Arries will be in a new look Volkswagen Polo and their fiercest competition is likely to come from teammates, the former championship winning crews of Jannie Habig /Douglas Judd and Enzo Kuun/Guy Hodgson.

The new-look Castrol Toyota team, now under the leadership of Glyn Hall, is expected to field two cars in the top class. Johnny Gemmell and Peter Marsh came close to taking the title last year while teammates Mark Cronje and Robert Paisley are hungrier than ever.

Team Total will field no less than four cars this season. In the top class Cape Town's Fernando Rueda (Toyota Run-Ex) and co-driver Kobus Very will be hoping for a solid start to their season. In another Toyota Run-X S2000 is Somerset West's Jean-Pierre Damseaux as driver and Andre Vermeulen reading the notes and they are overdue for a good result.

Chasing honours

Chasing honours in the lower classes are Mohammed Moosa and Grant Martin (Toyota Run-X S2000) who won the class A6 championship last year. The highly experienced KZN crew of Craig Trott and Dean Redelinghuys are also in the hunt for wins in their Toyota RunX.

The big unknown centres around last years N4 champions Charl Wilken and Greg Godrich. Word has it that they could be at the wheel of a Ford Fiesta, probably in Lonica/Minolta colours.

Also relatively unknown is a new two-car team of Hein Lategan and Visser du Plessis who will be piloting a pair of S2000 Toyota Auris.

2009 A7 champions Evan Hutchinson and Elvene Coetzee have armed themselves with a Volkswagen Polo under the banner of Motorite for 2010.

Refined and improved

"The NMCC and Total worked very well together last year and the 2009 Total Tour Natal was highly successful. It goes without saying that we are proud to have been selected by Total as their partner to organise the Durban leg of the SA Rally Championship again in 2010. We have refined and improved the event for 2010 and will also be adding a few surprises to make the rally more exciting and spectator friendly. After all, it is the premier motorsport event in KZN," said Vaughan.

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