

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

# Cape Town Young Guns Dominate 5-Hours of PE

*Port Elizabeth, South Africa — 15<sup>th</sup> June 2026*

The Cape Town duo of John-Henri Vaughan and Troy Dolinschek showcased sheer racing excellence during Round 3 of the Backdraft Racing Series at the Aldo Scribante Racetrack in Gqeberha. In some of the most extreme weather conditions seen this season, they dominated the race from start to finish and also claimed the coveted Index of Performance victory.

The severity of the conditions became evident after the chequered flag when only two cars from the entire field emerged from the race without damage.

### **Practice and Qualifying**

Friday's practice sessions were held in completely dry conditions, but those laps proved largely irrelevant as torrential rain greeted competitors on Saturday morning.

At the start of qualifying, the track was reasonably dry, favouring drivers who managed to set quick laps early. Minutes into the session, an oil spillage caused a lengthy delay. By the time qualifying resumed, the heavens had opened and conditions had deteriorated significantly, leaving competitors with little chance of improving their times.

Mike McLoughlin ultimately secured pole position ahead of Troy Dolinschek, who qualified second, while the remainder of the field was left unable to improve on their early benchmark laps.

### **Endurance Racing at Its Toughest**

Driving skills, endurance and race strategy were tested to their limits during the five-hour race. Even the most experienced competitors found themselves navigating uncharted territory as changing track conditions and lengthy stints created an enormous challenge for every driver who took the wheel.

Although all but one of the Backdraft Racing Cobras reached the finish, every competitor experienced multiple heart-stopping moments throughout the race.

Dolinschek adopted the boldest strategy of the day. Starting aggressively, he grabbed the lead and immediately set a blistering pace while many rivals struggled to find their feet around the 2.4 km circuit. That daring approach proved decisive. During his opening stint, Dolinschek built a substantial advantage that forced the rest of the field into chase mode for the remainder of the race.

With the weather forecast remaining unpredictable, several teams opted to preserve their tyres and maintain a consistent pace rather than push for outright speed.

East London winner Ernest Page appeared destined for another podium finish before an excursion off the circuit required extensive repairs in the pits. Similar misfortune struck Craig Czank and Mike McLoughlin.

Fikile Holomisa arrived in Gqeberha buoyed by the announcement of two new title sponsors, ProGrip and CTM. Teaming up with local talent Xolela Njumbuxa, the pair showed promising pace, but a combination of technical issues and off-track excursions resulted in lengthy pit stops throughout the race.

The biggest heartbreak belonged to Gavin Rooke. With only 15 minutes remaining, he lost control of his car and hit the wall heavily, bringing out the race's first and only yellow flag. The incident also forced the retirement of Dean Wolson and Mark Harvey, making them the sole team unable to reach the finish.

### **Michael Stephen Impresses on Cobra Debut**

Spectators were also treated to a special appearance from multiple national champion Michael Stephen, who completed the final stint in the famous "Pink Cobra" shared by Kishoor Pitamber and Steve Clark.

Taking over from Clark, Stephen immediately demonstrated his class by setting some of the fastest laps of the entire race. Unfortunately, suspension damage forced an unscheduled stop for repairs, ending any hopes of an overall victory. Nevertheless, the team still secured the Class A win, marking a successful debut for Stephen in the Backdraft Racing Series.

### **Championship Battles Tighten**

After three rounds, Mike McLoughlin leads the Backdraft Racing Series standings by just a single point over Mario da Silva and Rob Mordaunt.

In the overall championship, Kishoor Pitamber has extended his advantage thanks to his Class A victory. With son Mikael absent from the Port Elizabeth round due to Le Mans commitments, Kishoor now leads the championship outright ahead of Steve Clark and Mike McLoughlin.

### **Stradale Motorsport Dominates Sprint Race**

The one-hour sprint race was completely dominated by Stradale Motorsport.

Charl Arangies arrived in Port Elizabeth with a brand-new Porsche GT3 and immediately showcased its potential. Claiming pole position, fastest lap and leading every lap of the race, Arangies delivered a flawless performance to secure victory.

He was joined on the podium by teammates Roy Obery and Kobus Fourie, completing a clean sweep for Stradale Motorsport.

### **Looking Ahead to Mozambique**

Brian Martin reflected positively on another successful event:

*"It's incredible to see a mixed field of 22 cars taking the start of our Backdraft Racing Series. It's been a win-win situation for both the regional MSA clubs and our series as we continue to grow organically.*

*"It feels as though our Backdraft Cobras went to battle in this round, and our team will have their hands full preparing all the cars again for the next round in six weeks' time in Mozambique. That will be our crown jewel event of the year, as we remain the only circuit racing series in South Africa that crosses an international border."*

For the first time, the Backdraft Racing Series actively engaged with the local community through a partnership with TruFM, the IsiXhosa-language SABC radio station.

*"We believe that promoting our series through local radio and local communities will bring a broader audience to the circuits."*

DJ Simo "Captain Zee" Zokwana and the SABC outside broadcast team were present throughout the event, blending live race coverage with music and interviews featuring drivers, team members and fans.

The next round of the Backdraft Racing Series takes place in Maputo, Mozambique, on 24 and 25 July.

### **About Backdraft Racing Series**

The Backdraft Racing Series creates an opportunity for racers of all levels to compete, with a clear focus on lowering barriers to entry in motorsport. Built around the proven Backdraft Race Car platform and supported by the local Backdraft factory, the series offers a competitive yet accessible environment for drivers and teams.

In 2026, the series began operating as an independent championship. While Backdraft Race Cars remain central to the grid, the series is open to owners of any race car, creating a diverse and competitive field.

The championship consists of seven race events throughout the year, each featuring multiple sprint races and a headline endurance race. For both vehicle owners and Arrive & Drive competitors, Backdraft Racing offers a full-service, factory-supported race weekend solution designed to make participation as seamless as possible. This includes assistance with vehicle transport, technical support, race preparation, logistics and, for drivers without their own cars, a fully supported Arrive & Drive hire option.

Beyond the racing itself, Backdraft Racing provides a level of event support that is uncommon in South African motorsport, including full catering and hospitality for drivers and guests. Each event is also backed by extensive media coverage, with a dedicated media team and professional photographers capturing the action on and off the circuit.

Backdraft Racing further welcomes qualifying content creators who would like to experience and showcase the championship. Creators interested in attending an event or learning more about available opportunities are encouraged to get in touch.

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