



Media Information

SA RALLY-RAID CHAMPIONSHIP SHAKEN UP AFTER INGCO DOUBLE HEADER, PREDICTING A NERVE-WRECKING FINAL TWO ROUNDS

With five rounds of the 2024 SA Rally-Raid Championship now something of the past, there is no doubt that the championships will go down to the wire and that the final two rounds will be nerve-wrecking. The recent INGCO Parys 400 and INGCO Vaal 400 gave competitors the opportunity to score twice during the same weekend although this double-header event tested man and machine to the limit. In the end, the standings saw various changes that will add to the pressure to produce the goods at the remaining races.

Looking at the overall championship standings, a third victory this season for Henk Lategan/Brett Cummings (Toyota Gazoo Racing Hilux IMT EVO) resulted in them confirming their overall lead (128 points). They now also share the podium with four of their team-mates. Guy Botterill took his maiden win at the INGCO Parys 400 together with Dennis Murphy that moved the team to second place overall (104 points) while Giniel de Villiers/Elvéne Vonk (87 points) dropped one position to third overall.

Lance Woolridge/Kenny Gilbert rolled their Neil Woolridge Motorsport Ford Ranger T1+ resulting in the team not scoring points at the Parys 400 event. This saw them dropping off the podium to fourth place overall (70 points). Behind them they will feel the pressure from two teams with the same amount of points (60) – their team-mates, Gareth Woolridge/Boyd Dreyer who came so close to a victory at the INGCO Vaal 400 and the Blignaut brothers, Fouché and Bertus (#TeamHilux Rally-Raid Toyota IMT EVO) who could not complete the same event.

The fourth TGRSA team, the young Saood Variawa and his French navigator, Francois Cazalet, finished fifth at both the recent events and made the biggest jump in the overall standings when they shot up from 17th place to seventh place (38 points). Behind them, Gerhard Heinlein (Red-Lined VK56 Evo2) made use of different navigator, but he has scored after each event and now finds himself as the leading Adventurer Class driver in eighth place overall (35 points). He is being followed by two #TeamHilux Rally-Raid Toyota drivers, Johan Horn, who could not score points at both the INGCO events and the defending Adventurer Class champion, Eben Basson, who won the class twice at the recent outings together with his navigator, Leander Pienaar. They trail Heinlein by a mere point (34 points).

In the overall navigators' standings, Johan Horn's brother and navigator, Werner, and Pienaar share the same amount of points (34) and lead Adriaan Roets, who navigates for Johan de Bruyn (Red-Lined REVO T1), by a single point. De Bruyn/Roets lost their Adventurer Class lead with De Bruyn now 11th in the overall drivers' standings (33 points) and Roets 10th in the navigators' overall standings.

The class championships are still a very tight affair. Here teams receive a bonus of five points for starting an event and this can make a difference in the standings. Lategan/Cummings (153 points) are still leading the Ultimate T1+ Class and are 18 points ahead of Botterill/Murphy (135 points) who overtook De Villiers/Vonk (116 points) who are now third. Lance Woolridge/Gilbert (100 points) remained fourth, 15 points ahead of their team-mates and the defending champions, Gareth/Dreyer and the Blignaut brothers with both teams having earned 85 points. The defending champions might realistically not be able to defend their title successfully, but they still have an outside chance to finish the season on the podium.

Variawa/Cazalet again made a big move and jumped from 14th place up to seventh (64 points) while the Horns dropped from sixth to eighth place (58 points), leading Chris Visser/Albertus Venter (Red-Lined Motorsport REVO T1+ GTR) by two points after the latter team could only complete the first of the double-header events. Brian Baragwanath/Leonard Cremer (Century Racing CR7 Twin Turbo) are 10th (46 points).

The Adventurer Championship saw various changes including a new leader in the drivers' standings where Gerhard Heinlein (149 points) demoted De Bruyn (135 points) to second place while Basson (130 points) moved onto the podium with the team of Basson/Pienaar now within striking distance to defend their title successfully. Johan van Staden (Renault Duster) moved up one place to fourth (98 points) after also scoring at the INGCO events. Despite experiencing some difficulties Philip Botha, who only participated in the first three events of the season, is now fifth (69 points) in the standings.

Behind them, newcomer Danie Ludick (Red-Lined VK56) is seventh after completing his maiden two races and a top five position is winking. He has the same number of points as the German driver, Jürgen Schröder (Nissan Navara) who could not complete the recent two events.

In the Adventurer Navigators' Championship, Roets (De Bruyn's navigator) still leads (135 points) although only five points now separate him from the defending champion (Pienaar) who moved up to second position. A few intricate battles can be expected at the front of the class that will make for nail-biting racing.

Sean van Staden (Renault Duster) moved from fourth to third place (98 points), pushing Rudi Heinlein, who missed the two INGCO events, to fourth although only five points now separate them. Mynhardt (56 points) who deputised for Heinlein is fifth.

Behind them things can change easily as the various navigators have competed only occasionally and if team Denzil/Williamson continue their positive initiation race, Williamson (40 points) can even set his sights on a possible top five finish at the end of the season.

In the SSV Championship, Geoff Minnitt/Rodney Burke (Hydro Power Equipment Can-Am Maverick) are still leading (66 points) although the team did not compete in the two INGCO-sponsored events. Ruperd Fourie (54 points) moved to second and is closing the gap to Minnitt with Puck Klaassen currently third (28 points) although she has recently competed in the Challenger Class. Darron Gudmanz (20 points) is fourth.

Burke still leads In the SSV Navigators' Championship and is 12 points ahead of Fourie's navigator, Morné van Rensburg (54 points) with Carl Swanepoel third (23 points) after navigating for Klaassen at the second round. Gudmanz' navigator, Quintin Lessing is fourth (20 points).

Toyota has built a comfortable lead in the Manufacturer's standings (542 points) followed by Ford (176 points); Nissan (39 points); Renault (35 points) and Can-Am (32 points).

Teams only have three weeks to prepare for the sixth round of the 2024 SA Rally-Raid Championship and will take on the penultimate event at Phakisa in the Free State on 13 and 14 September.

Images: Dave Ledbitter – [click to download](#)

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