

Racing Bulletin



EST. 1907

PERFORMANCE DRIVEN™

VW Polo Cup

Bonafede third overall for Champion Young Drivers at Zwartkops

Despite enduring a tough day at the office, Champion Young Drivers Devin Robertson and Gennaro Bonafede emerged from round six of the Engen Volkswagen Cup at Zwartkops Raceway on Saturday in second and third places respectively in the championship points standings.

Bonafede scored a fine third overall for the day after finishing fifth and fourth in two incident-filled races, while team-mate Robertson lost the championship lead after being involved in incidents – not entirely of his own making – in both races and scored a meager nine points for a 10th and a seventh.

The two youngsters, both former VW Cup rookies of the year, qualified fourth and fifth on Saturday morning, with Robertson just one tenth of a second off Kieren Quarmbly's pole lap time and Bonafede 0,087 sec behind his younger team-mate.

The traditional lucky draw saw Robertson pull second and fourth places on the starting grid, while Bonafede had to be content with two sixth places.

Robertson led the first race for the opening five laps and was locked in a battle with Kyle Barnes. The lead swapped hands a number of times before Robertson, leading on lap nine, and Barnes made contact in turn eight and both cars spun.

Robertson dropped back to 11th and was only able to make up one place before the end of the 15-lap race. Bonafede in the meantime had made a great start and was challenging for fourth place at the end of the first lap when he and another competitor touched in the hairpin, sending the Champion spark plugs Polo into a half spin and dropping the w2007 rookie of the year to seventh at the end of the first lap.



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championracing@gmail.com

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Battling with a car that wasn't really on the pace all weekend, Bonafede was forced to play catch-up for the remainder of the race and finally crossed the finish line in fifth to score a valuable eight championship points.

Robertson's woes continued in race two. He and Brennon Green, who started immediately in front of him on the front row of the grid, made contact as the closely bunched field headed into turn one. The 2008 rookie of the year was spun off the circuit and into a sand trap, where he watched the entire field pass him by.

He was second last in the 16-car field at the end of the first lap. By half distance he had worked his way up to 10th and was seventh at the end of the 15-lapper.

Bonafede in the meantime had made another good start and was third at the end of lap one. He and Miguel Pasqualli contested third place in typically spirited Polo Cup fashion for a few laps, but they were unable to maintain the pace of the leading cars. They dropped back to fourth and fifth at half distance behind Quarmby, eventual race winner Mathew Hodges and Bryan Morgan. Bonafede held on to take fourth spot ahead of Pasqualli at the finish and take his points tally for the day to a useful 17.

Hodges now leads the championship with 126 points from Robertson (114) and Bonafede (102). Morgan is fourth on 92.

Robertson: "Unfortunately we were unable to have our new car ready for this weekend's races. Our old car wasn't really on the pace this weekend, but we were doing OK until we got caught up in one or two incidents. I'm disappointed to have scored so few points when we looked good enough to retain our championship lead."

Bonafede: "We battled to get the right set-up for the car all weekend and were just not fast enough to contend for top honours today. The grid positions I drew for the two races weren't very helpful either. We're 24 points behind the championship leader with six races remaining. The championship is still on."

Ronnie Erasmus, motor sport manager of Federal Mogul, manufacturers of Champion spark plugs: "Both drivers showed grit and determination this weekend and remain in the top three in the championship despite their problems today. We have another three rounds of the series remaining and I'm confident we will come back strongly at the next round at Phakisa Freeway in the Free State on September 5."

Long time supporters of motor sport in South Africa and, in recent years, of exciting young talent, Federal Mogul's Ferodo brake pad and Champion spark plug brands are world famous and used by top competitors in all branches of motor sport. They are official suppliers to both the Engen Volkswagen Cup series and the Formula Volkswagen single-seater championship.

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