

PCCA: Murray and Grove take overall honours in action-packed Townsville race weekend

13/07/2021 The third round of Porsche Paynter Dixon Carrera Cup Australia saw Cooper Murray end the three-race winning streak of Mobil Pro Championship leader, Cameron Hill. Stephen Grove was victorious in the Morris Finance Pro-Am class, while Matthew Payne gave Team Porsche New Zealand and the Earl Bamber Motorsport their first Carrera Cup Australia race win.

The Reid Park Circuit on the streets of Townsville in tropical North Queensland hosted Round 3 of the 2021 Porsche Paynter Dixon Carrera Cup Australia series on the weekend. The decision to contest the NTI Townsville 500 event followed an anxious wait for many teams, due to the recent travel restrictions - brought about by outbreaks of the Coronavirus pandemic in many states. As a result of the restrictions still in place for most parts of Sydney, NSW, Tim Miles, Jackson Walls, Drew Hall and Indiran Padayachee were not prohibited to compete in this round, reducing the field size to 22 cars.

The 127th round in series history saw Cameron Hill enter as the hot favourite in the Mobil Pro class after his Squadra Bespoke liveried 911 GT3 Cup car set the pace at The Bend Motorsport Park last time out. In the process Hill became just the seventh driver in series history to win three consecutive round wins.

Hill's 16-month unbeaten odyssey would come to an end though in Townsville as Cooper Murray edged out the championship leader to claim Round 3. The round result decided on countback in favour of Murray's higher finishing position in the final race, while Hill would be classified first in Race 1.

Impressive Team Porsche New Zealand driver, Matthew Payne, would take the final race to finish third overall, handing the Earl Bamber Motorsport team their first win in the premier Carrera Cup Australia series. The 18-year old completed a remarkable comeback drive to finish third overall, was all the more impressive when one considers it was the young Kiwi first time in Townsville and on a street circuit.

Murray's pathway to his third Carrera Cup round win was anchored by a measured drive to victory in the Sunday morning Enduro Cup race, where he beat home Hill and Matt Payne following another typically combative affair.

He then trailed Payne home in the third and final race to do just enough to claim the round victory, Hill finishing fourth, behind Aaron Love.

Murray's win was his first since the Adelaide 500 last February and also reasserted his position at the top of the Michelin Junior standings, over teammate Harri Jones.

With three rounds of the 2021 Porsche Paynter Dixon Carrera Cup Australia Championship now complete, Cameron Hill holds an expanded 160-point lead over Cooper Murray, who now sits second. Harri Jones is third in the standings while David Wall and Aaron Love complete the top five.

Things were just as tight in the Morris Finance Pro-Am category, Stephen Grove edging out Geoff Emery by a single point to claim the Round 3 victory. Grove's single-digit margin came thanks to the bonus point awarded for pole position, while Dean Cook completed the Townsville Pro-Am podium.

Geoff Emery's strong weekend has him with an 80-point lead in the Morris Finance Pro-Am class, Stephen Grove and Sam Shahin split by just 10 points in second and third, respectively.

The fourth round of the championship is currently scheduled for the Sydney Super Night event at Sydney Motorsport Park this August 20-22.

STANDINGS (After 3 of 8 Rounds)

Mobil Pro

Pos Driver Points

- 1 Cameron Hill 510
- 2 Cooper Murray 350
- 3 Harri Jones 326
- 4 David Wall 318
- 5 Aaron Love 254

Morris Finance Pro-Am

Pos Driver Points

- 1 Geoff Emery 422
- 2 Stephen Grove 343
- 3 Sam Shahin 332
- 4 Marc Cini 305

5 Scott Taylor 281

Video Highlights:

Race 1 https://www.instagram.com/tv/CRI_iLNDZew/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link

Race 2 https://www.instagram.com/tv/CRKx_aODb9m/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link

Race 3 https://www.instagram.com/p/CRLO34SDSoH/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link

*For race information, videos and interviews, follow the Porsche Motorsport Australia social pages:
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Subline: Cooper Murray

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Subline: Matthew Payne took the TAG Heuer Pole Position award in the Mobil Pro class

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