

Love climbs into Carrera Cup Australia Championship contention with crushing Sandown victory

22/08/2022 Aaron Love has secured back-to-back Porsche Paynter Dixon Carrera Cup Australia rounds amidst a dramatic sixth round of the season at Sandown Raceway in Melbourne, while local Geoff Emery triumphed in Morris Pro-Am.

A pair of races produced remarkable racing and varied results as the two drivers first and second in the championship each suffered a non-finish in what was a dramatic day of racing.

Dylan O'Keeffe, who trailed leader Harri Jones by just 22 points following his Race 1 win, failed to finish the enduro cup race – while points leader Harri Jones was a non-finisher on Sunday afternoon in the weekend finale.

Through it all, Aaron Love continued his remarkable run to claim the round, leading Simon Fallon home in a 1-2 result for the Bob Jane T-Marts Sonic Motor Racing outfit.

David Russell completed the round podium in his milestone 50th Carrera Cup Australia round.

Love's path to the round win came via a racy performance in the Enduro Cup, claiming the victory there before dominating the final race to win by the largest ever margin for a Porsche race at Sandown.

His repeat winning performance ended a streak of seven different winners from the last seven Carrera Cup rounds.

Fallon's podium was the first of his Carrera Cup career, the former Michelin Sprint Challenge champion producing a racy performance to finish the Enduro Cup race in second, before leading the finale' briefly and ultimately finishing fifth to secure second overall.

Russell's podium came after qualifying only 14th, working his way through the field as the weekend progressed.

Remarkably, Harri Jones continues to hold a championship lead into Mount Panorama's seventh round of the championship, despite failing to finish the final race.

Aaron Love, who is fifth, has dramatically closed the margin to the leaders and can consider himself a title contender as the championship approaches the business end of the season.

Geoff Emery's Morris Pro-Am victory came by virtue of two wins from the three races, while fellow home-town hero Matt Belford won the Enduro Cup race on Sunday morning.

Belford finished second overall for the weekend while Adrian Flack was third.

The enduro cup race on Sunday morning was a wild affair and while Aaron Love claimed the victory, it was no easy thing.

A wild start saw Max Vidau briefly lead into turn one, before running wide and allowing Love and O'Keeffe back through.

A crazy sequence of racing a few laps later saw Love wide at Turn one, opening the door to the race one winner to re-take the lead.

The trip then raced wheel to wheel on the run to turn six, with Love re-taking the lead and Vidau grabbing second as O'Keeffe ran around the outside at the high speed, 200-plus Km/hr corner.

O'Keeffe ran slightly wide and partially through the runoff, he and Vidau making contact on the re-join in the braking zone with the hit sending the TekworkX driver spinning into the fence and out of the race. O'Keeffe would also later pit and fail to finish the race with damage.

On the restart, Love lead Harri Jones, who was the main beneficiary of the exchange, and teammate

Simon Fallon.

Fallon was quickly able to pass Jones for second, however, to secure a 1-2 result for the Bob Jane T-Marts backed Sonic entries, with Jones scoring his first Top 3 finish since Darwin back in June.

Matt Belford won a wild Morris Pro-Am fight ahead of Liam Talbot and Adrian Flack, while Race 1 winner Geoff Emery was fifth and fellow title contender Sam Shahin a lap one non-finish.

Fallon then jumped to an early lead at the start of race three, however ran wide at turn three to hand the lead to his teammate – one he'd never lose.

Love powered away in front to win by more than eight seconds while Callum Hedge charged his way through to second.

Jackson Walls was third in the final race; contact between he and teammate Jones the reason for the latter's non-finish in the closing stages of the race. Russell was fourth while Fallon slipped to fifth following his earlier moment at turn three.

While O'Keeffe could recover no further than 15th from the back of the grid, fellow title contender David Wall finished 10th following a late off at Turn 9.

Emery rebounded strongly to claim a narrow Morris Pro-Am race win over Belford and Flack to determine the class podium.

After a remarkably busy stretch of racing, the Porsche Paynter Dixon Carrera Cup Australia Championship takes a well-earned break prior to the penultimate round of the championship at the Repco Bathurst 1000 this October 6-9.

QUOTES:

Aaron Love, Pro winner "It's a pretty good felling to win the round here and carry on from Tailem Bend. For us to win two out of the three races and have Simon (Fallon) second for a 1-2 Sonic podium finish is pretty cool. The car felt great all weekend and the Sonic team's been working really hard, so its huge props to them, they've really turned it on this year and its definitely showing on and off track. I struggled a bit with our starts this weekend, so got through the first few corners and then tried to settle in. I came up behind Simon and didn't want to have a big lung at him – because it was too big a risk as he's my teammate, but he made a little bit of a mistake into turn 2 and I saw it. So I tried to stay hard to the left through turn 3 and went wide out to the right. He gave the corner to me in the end which was nice, I didn't have to work very hard for it, but in the end we got the race win and round win, so I couldn't be happier."

Geoff Emery, Morris Finance Pro-Am: "It feels really good, I obviously did my best to throw it away in race 2, but we had a really good car in race 3, so I think that made up for everything. Overall very happy

for the round win and big thanks to the ASM boys, they gave me an awesome car, which I think was our advantage this weekend. I'm very happy to win the round.

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