



Harri Jones claims maiden Porsche Paynter Dixon Carrera Cup Australia round win

22/05/2022 Harri Jones has added another trophy to his growing collection, claiming Round 2 of the Porsche Paynter Dixon Carrera Cup Australia Championship following a final-race showdown with David Russell.

It was a pair of first-time winners at Winton Raceway as Morris Finance Pro-Am rookie Matt Belford claimed a home-state round win in just his second ever Carrera Cup event.

Jones' pathway to victory was set up with his drive to win in race one, and backed up with a solid run to second in the 25-lap enduro race that commenced the Sunday program.

David Russell won that race – his first Carrera Cup victory since October 2015 – though Jones' second position saw him lead the round points heading into the deciding finale' later in the afternoon.

In a winner-take-all affair, Jones' made the better start from the outside of the front row and led the experienced Russell into turn one – setting up a tense battle to the line but one that Jones' would never not control.

The win delivered the young Michelin Junior his maiden Carrera Cup round victory in just his 10th round start: and rocketed him from fourth to a clear first in the championship standings in the process.

Russell's second overall was his 11th podium finish in his lengthy Carrera Cup career and the first for the Dayco / EMA Motorsport team since joining the championship.

Dylan O'Keeffe completed the podium in his Dexion / RAM Motorsport entry.

The Victorian finished just behind Russell and Jones' in the enduro cup race on Sunday morning and then finished fourth – behind a strong Dale Wood – in the 16-lap finale' to book his first trip to the podium since Sydney Motorsport Park in 2018.

Wood's strong weekend was his best in some time in the championship aboard his Timken EBM entry, while Luke Youlden finished fifth overall as TekworkX Motorsport continued their speedy start to the 2022 season.

Matt Belford's pathway to victory in the Morris Finance Pro-Am came via a strong win in a dramatic Enduro Cup race early on Sunday morning.

The Victorian, driving for the Porsche Centre Melbourne team, survived a dramatic race that saw the top two finishes from Saturday's opener fail to finish.

He then held off a charging Rodney Jane in the closing laps to record his first Carrera Cup class win; having scored pole position earlier in the weekend.

Belford then backed up that performance with a second-straight race win in the third and final race of the weekend to do enough to claim his maiden overall win.

Jane was second, his first Pro-Am class podium finish since Bathurst in 2008, while Stephen Grove finished third overall for the weekend.

Round one winner Geoff Emery had a challenging Sunday, having won the opening race on Saturday afternoon: he failed to finish race two after early damage before recovering to ninth in class in the third race.

With two of eight rounds complete, Harri Jones has charged to a commanding 70-point lead in the championship – having entered the Winton weekend fourth in the championship.

David Russell has moved to second in the standings with a five-point margin to former champion David

Wall in third.

Max Vidau sits fourth in the championship just two points further back, while Dylan O'Keeffe has moved to fifth.

Stephen Grove took over from Geoff Emery as the leader in Morris Finance Pro-Am class after two rounds, his lead 15 points over the Round 1 winner.

Sam Shahin sits third in the championship after his Sunday performances saw him rebound from a race-one DNF at Winton.

The tightly-packed Pro-Am field has the top five cars split by just 59 points heading into the third round of the championship.

Porsche Paynter Dixon Carrera Cup Australia returns to the top end of Australia for Round 3, with the Merlin Darwin Triple Crown event to be held between June 17-19.

QUOTES

Harri Jones – Pro – Round winner

"That was an awesome race to come away with the win for the weekend and take my first Carrera Cup round. I'm really happy and want to say a massive thank you to the McElrea team, they gave me an absolute rocket this weekend. Winton is not our home track, so to come here after many years and get the win, its amazing and credit must go to the work the team has been doing to make our car fast this weekend, where we could get a good start and to lead the flag, I can't thank everyone enough.

"I had a poor start in the race this morning, so we worked on getting more rear tyre temp and this afternoon it just hooked up. I can't wait for Darwin, we were up there for a two day test a few weeks back, so I can't wait, the track is absolutely amazing and will definitely be different weather to here. We've been freezing all weekend here and up there will be very warm, so looking forward to getting up there and getting amongst it."

Matthew Belford – Morris Finance Pro-Am winner

"It was a great race and would like to dedicate this one to Karl Batson and the whole Porsche Centre Melbourne Team. The beauty of starting first in Pro-Am is you just get in behind the pros, Rodney Jane put me under a lot of pressure again. I was able to pull away a little bit, so it was just a perfect race. From what happened at Albert Park I wanted to come here and just have three clean races, so to get two race wins and a third is just a dream come true.

"I'm a bit like the young Pros to be honest (laughs), they go through the Porsche Pyramid, whereas I'm an old guy whose been through the Porsche Pyramid. I did all the levels of Porsche Track Experience

training in Queensland, went onto Porsche Michelin Sprint Challenge and worked my way up and now have come to Carrera Cup and I still feel like I'm a little bit less experienced. The fast Pro-Am's in this championship are really experienced, so to be here and be competitive, that's really what I'm after."

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