

Wood dominates final round while Sargent seals Porsche Michelin Sprint Challenge Championship

26/11/2022 Phillip Island, Victoria. Thomas Sargent did everything he needed to do to claim the 2022 Porsche Michelin Sprint Challenge Australia Series in the final round at the Phillip Island Grand Prix Circuit.

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Ryan Wood swept to the final round win with a pair of race victories, but couldn't overhaul his season-long rival in the title battle.

A pair of second place finishes in two races held at the high-speed Victorian circuit capped off a remarkable year for Sargent, who finished first or second in every race this year.

It was also the second consecutive one-make Porsche title for Sargent's CHE Engineering / Tegra Australia team, who claimed the 2021 Carrera Cup title with Cameron Hill, and also comes in the same year the two drivers teamed up to win the Bathurst 6 Hour endurance race.

Meanwhile, Brett Boulton claimed the Morris Pro-Am class title victory, his first in one-make Porsche competition, while Danny Stuttered won the round.
Lachlan Harburg claimed the Class B title, while home-town hero Jacob Li dominated the final round to take the weekend.

Saturday's race day was a dramatic affair much as the entire season has been, and ultimately saw the second of three races declared early with no points awarded.

In Race 1, Sargent beat Wood into the first corner and led the race until a Safety Car slowed the field on lap two.

That yellow was caused when Tom Taplin and Lachlan Bloxsom made contact at Turn four, the damage ending Taplin's day and sending Bloxom - at the time a contender for third in the championship - to the back of the field.

Wood pounced on the restart, passing his season-long rival to grab a race lead he would never lose.

Sargent fended off advances from Courtney Prince to hold on to second, with the Sonic driver a strong third.

Aron Shields was next, while Adrian Flack claimed Morris Pro-Am and finished fifth outright.

Sam Shahin was second in Pro-Am, marginally closing the championship lead to Brett Boulton, who was fourth in class.

Jacob Li claimed Class B in the opening race and claimed an outstanding 11th outright in the 30-car field.

Race two started with Wood out-muscling Sargent for the lead on the run into turn one, while Harrison Goodman charged up from the third row to run third.

However the race was brought under Safety Car after four laps when contact between Danny Stuttered and Sam Shahin saw the former turned into the barriers on the exit of Turn 10.

The lengthy Safety Barrier repair forced the race to be red flagged and ultimately declared, with no points awarded.

That left the final race to decide two of the three titles - Boulton provisionally taking home the Morris Pro-Am crown following the race two no result.

The final race was gripping as Wood and Sargent again battled hard in the early stages, Wood taking the early lead and leading a freight train of cars before he was able to pull away.

The EBM / Team Porsche NZ driver claimed his eighth race win of the year - one more than Sargent - however the latter's safe second position was more than enough to seal the title.

He ultimately won the title by 19 points, with Aron Shields completing the podium both for the Phillip Island round and the season.

Shields had been forced to fend off Courtney Prince for much of the race before ultimately pulling away in third.

Prince would drop back to fifth position by the flag, behind a charging Lachlan Bloxsom who finished fourth thanks to a late pass on the Sonic driver.

In Morris Pro-Am, Adrian Flack was an early non-finisher after an incident - that also included Sam Shahin - saw him spun to the inside of turn four on the opening lap, reduced to being a spectator. Shahin also dropped to the back of the field after being spun around and was forced to recover.

That left Stuttered in the key position to take the class race and round victory, with Boulton second and Ben Stack third in both the race and the round.

In Class B, Lachlan Harburg needed only to start and finish race three to claim the title, which he did successfully.

Li won the race over Carr and Sticklen, with the round result reflecting that race result as well.

QUOTES:

Thomas Sargent – 2022 Pro Champion & Jim Richards Endurance Championship winner

“It has been a very, very hard fought year, it was a late year due to Covid we started quite late and since then has been very awesome to have all this racing at the end of the year. The racing has been awesome between Ryan and I and the rest of the field so I’ve learnt so much about Porsche driving and race craft. I have had a great time and I’m super stoked to have wrapped up the championship, its something we want to achieve and it's been amazing to do it with the CHE Racing Team again.

"This car has a lot of pedigree having won the Carrera Cup championship with Cameron and now Sprint Challenge with myself.

"That was one good thing coming into this year we knew where we stood with the car and the team, so it came down to me and it showed in the end. Its great to add another championship to that car's

record."

Brett Boulton, Morris Pro-Am Championship winner

"Yes I had to bring it home in that last race, pressure was off it was such good fun. The guys just said go out and have some fun and that's what we did, it was great. We knew we needed consistency to win the Championship, Sam (Shahin) is an awesome driver, does plenty laps and racing, so for us it was just about being there getting as many wins as possible, being consistent.

"I'm really proud of my driving considering I haven't been in the car for two years. Its great to get the championship third time lucky, I knew I had to get the job done otherwise it would have been a bit embarrassing, but its an awesome team and I couldn't be happier."

Lachy Harburg, Class B Champion

"The start of this year we got the car and we said we might do one or two rounds and see how it goes, so to be here, now having done five rounds and have won the championship is amazing, I'm absolutely elated it means a lot to me.

"I was never the fastest car, I was just consistent. So to finish the season and do the job its really satisfying. It has been a really competitive season with Jacob (Li), Brad (Carr) and Nathan (Sticklen) we've always been at close quarters with our pace, I felt bad that the guy I had to beat was also the best guy in the field. Its really good to race him though considering Nathan's experience."

Final Standings: https://www.porschesprintchallenge.com.au/standings/

For race information, videos and interviews, follow the Porsche Motorsport Australia social pages: Instagram - @PorscheMotorsportAU / Twitter - @PorscheMspAU / Facebook.com/ PorscheMotorsportAU

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